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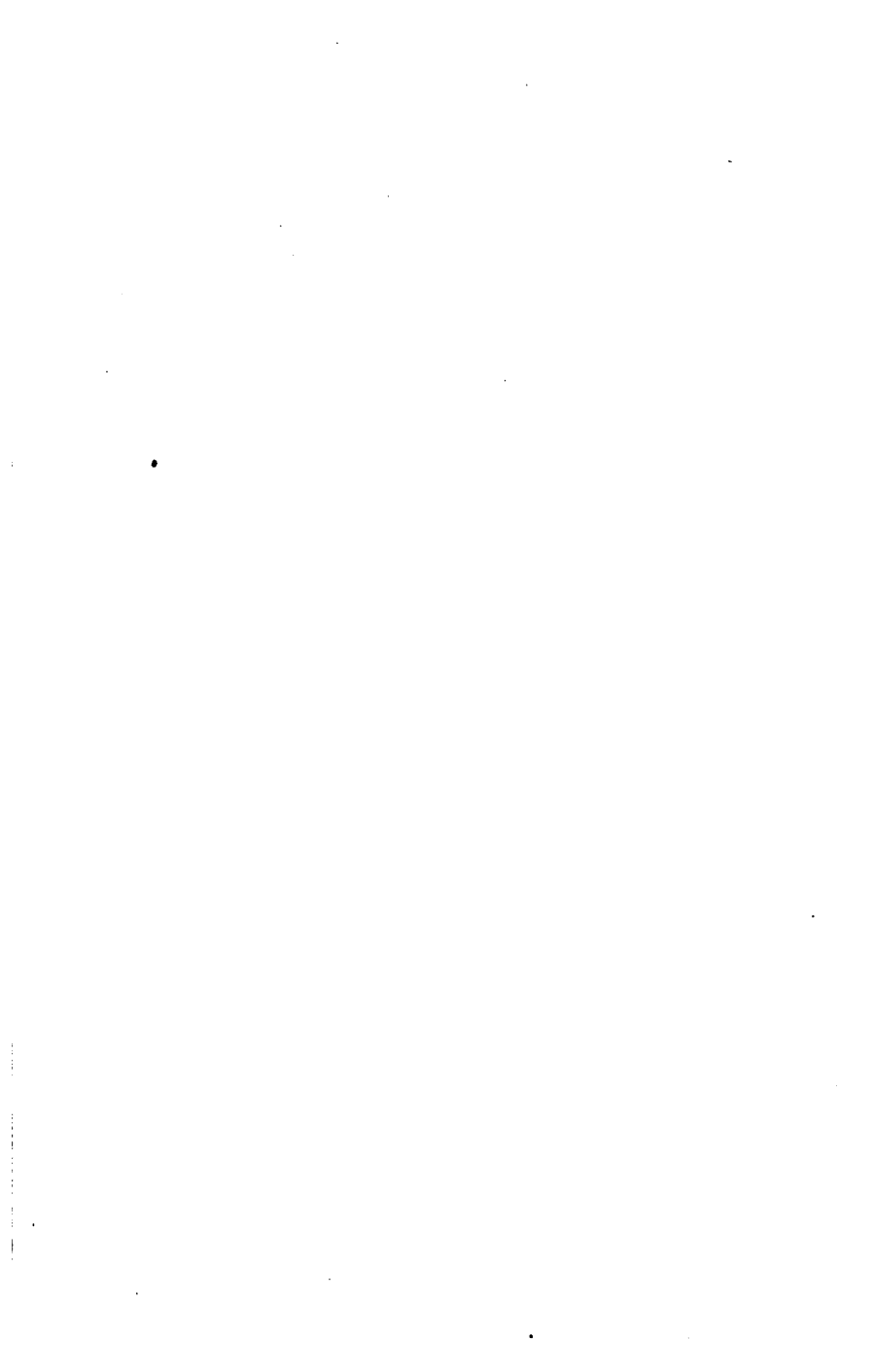


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**HOLY SCRIPTURE THE TEST
OF TRUTH:**

AN APPEAL TO ITS PARAMOUNT AUTHORITY

**AGAINST CERTAIN PASSAGES
IN DR. HANCOCK'S "DEFENCE," AND IN THE
WRITINGS OF BARCLAY AND PENN.**

BY RICHARD BALL.

**LONDON:
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"THEY" (our forefathers) "professed to be instructed in no new truths; they had nothing to add to the faith once delivered to the saints; they cordially acknowledged the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures; they were deeply versed in the contents of the Sacred Volume; and they openly confessed that whatsoever doctrine or practice is contrary to its declarations, must be 'accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.'"

Yearly Meeting's Epistle 1835.



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PREFACE.

THE present circumstances of our religious Society are at once the reason and the apology for my venturing to address my fellow-members in Christian profession. Those essential points of doctrine on which the Society is divided, admit of no compromise. They must be brought, like all other points, whether of faith or practice, to the only infallible standard,—the written word of God. To no other authority is any Christian called to bow; and while appealing to this alone, I trust to obtain the candid attention of my fellow-members generally; who, however they may question any of my conclusions, must approve the ground on which I have sought to form them. Nothing is more prejudicial to the mind, in reference to religion, than settling down upon a conventional or traditional faith; and thus accepting as Gospel Truth that which is asserted to be such, without examining the grounds on which these assertions

rest. This believing by *proxy* may be better suited to the natural indolence of man, than a diligent and prayerful examination of Holy Scripture; but the one will keep the mind in a state of dangerous ignorance, accessible to every error, while the other will make "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

The opinions I have ventured to express, are not the result of "new views." They were formed long before I was aware how many in secret entertained them: they have been deepened and strengthened by closer examination. Every fresh recurrence to the only legitimate source of Gospel Truth, has confirmed my conviction of their general accordance with that paramount authority; while a renewed investigation of the early history of the Christian church, has satisfied my mind, that the origin of certain prevalent unscriptural views, is to be found in some very early, and apparently unimportant, departures from Scripture language, and from the simplicity of revealed truth. It was thus, that succeeding ages were furnished with a plausible foundation for many serious errors in doctrine and practice, and also in matters relating to church government.

If, in this feeble effort, I have unintentionally or ignorantly advanced any thing not in accordance

with Holy Scripture, I shall feel myself indebted to any Christian brother who will kindly correct my error*; for while I must on principle refuse “subscription” to any human authority, I shall most willingly submit to be tested by the Inspired Writings.

The publication of the “Beacon,” and of some other recent works by members of the Society of Friends, has given greater publicity to the *doctrinal* differences which exist among us. An increased knowledge of Holy Scripture, and a more implicit deference to its authority, had already manifested the error of certain views, held from educational bias by a large proportion of our members. Many had in consequence left the Society; and the number was rapidly increasing of those who felt dissatisfied, not because “so narrow a path” was “uncongenial” to *them*†, (for the Bible had directed them into “*the* narrow way”), nor because they had any desire to mix in the pleasures or dissipations of the world, but because they were sitting under the ministry of those, who, if they were sound as to their own hope of salvation, did not “preach unto them Jesus,” but, with a strange peculiarity, kept the

* Having put my name to this little tract, I shall not feel bound to notice any *anonymous* observations upon it.

† See “A Defence,” &c. by Dr. Hancock, p. 80.

wheat to themselves, leaving the famishing people to perish on the husks.

The more open discussions which have since taken place, have discovered to those who feel dissatisfied, that there are very many who sympathize with them. A religious revival has undoubtedly commenced ; and is it not therefore the duty of those, who, under other circumstances, might feel themselves compelled to resort to the painful alternative of secession, to be willing to go a little longer mourning on their way, in the hope that brighter days are opening upon us, when there will be a large increase of truly anointed ministers ; of such as will fully, and faithfully, and fearlessly declare the whole counsel of God—the truth as it is in Jesus—preaching “repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”—that Gospel of which Paul says, “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (Gal. i. 8.)

The present state of our Society is truly a painful one ; yet, as the spirit of inquiry which now prevails, has arisen from a spread of Scriptural information in various ways, its tendency will doubtless be to establish more and more firmly the paramount authority of Holy Scripture, and to remove those obstacles to Evangelical religion, which opi-

nions not derived from that source, have raised up and maintained.

“ While we strive to follow the example of our Lord, in a continual reference to that which is written, let us never forget that it is ‘ with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.’ Persons may read and study the Bible—may admit its truth—and yet be like a sick man, who, instead of taking the medicine prescribed for his disease, should content himself with analyzing its ingredients. Such a theologian may be a stranger to the actual presence and indwelling of God’s testimony in his heart,—may be unacquainted with the fulfilment of the gracious assurance, ‘ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.’ ”

The Christian church is awakened from a lengthened slumber ; she is shaking off the nightmare of superstition, and the flitting visions of dreamy speculation, and opening her eyes broadly and fearlessly to the light of truth. Upon the shining pathway, which is before her, she will walk in glory and in strength, heedless alike of foes on the one hand or enticements on the other.

“ Onward to the goal ! ” must be the Christian’s motto ; and he is not yet fully imbued with the spirit of his Master, who is not prepared to give up every view, or opinion, or practice, however

time-hallowed or however dear, which he discovers to be at variance with the doctrine and testimony of our Divine Saviour and his Inspired Apostles*.

* For this publication the writer is exclusively and individually responsible, with the exception only of such passages as are noted with quotation marks, and also of the various articles in the Appendix. In the course of the work, Italics are frequently employed, to mark emphasis in quotations, in cases where they may not occur in the original works.

The Elms, near Taunton,
1895.

HOLY SCRIPTURE THE TEST OF TRUTH.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

HAVING been, for many years, a close observer of the course of events in the Christian world, and having been deeply interested in noticing, in almost all the different sections into which it is divided, an increasing willingness to submit every doctrine and practice to the test of Scripture, it has not been matter of surprise to me, that our religious society has partaken of this mental movement, and that the study of Holy Scripture has tended to the spread of evangelical religion ; nor, that this has occasioned much dissatisfaction with both writers and preachers whose principles do not appear to be in accordance with " the truth as it is in Jesus."

There are those who have long seen and deplored that there was much, both in the accredited writings of the Society, and in the preaching of many of its acknowledged ministers, which would not bear this test ; and to them it has been evident that an increased deference to the authority of Scripture, would, of necessity, bring these erroneous opinions more closely under review, and consequently ex-

cite that dissatisfaction, which is become so obvious, and which is so rapidly spreading *.

For the origin of some of these unscriptural views, we must go further back than the rise of our little Society in the seventeenth century, or than the Protestant Reformation. We must go back to the age of the Apostolical Fathers†, when the attempt to graft the simple and sublime truths of the Gospel on the refined Platonic philosophy of the Greek school, began to introduce into the church of Christ a multitude of errors, which disfigured its doctrines and debased its practice. Thus originated the grievous heresies of the Greek and Romish Churches, and also that mysticism, which, seeking to be wise above that which is written, has, in different ages and sections of the church, carried away men professing a high grade of spirituality, and has led them to adopt a system of ethics, the tendency of which is to give the authority of Revelation to their own feelings and impressions.

Deeply impressed as I am with the injury which the spirit of party has in all ages inflicted on the Christian church, I should not venture to enter the fearful field of controversy, but from a sincere desire to promote by free discussion a better understand-

* In referring to the mental movement on the all-important subject of religion which has been excited among us, the fact cannot be too generally known, that the publication of the "Beacon" afforded merely a plausible and tangible ground of objection. That objection, though to a certain extent smothered, previously existed, and it was pointed against social meetings for the study of Holy Scripture.

† By Apostolical Fathers, we mean those who were contemporaries with the Apostles; and of these there are only four, of whose writings any thing remains to us—namely, Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, and Polycarp.

ing of those points whereon the Society is divided, and to endeavour to ascertain how far certain doctrines and opinions, generally supposed to have been from the first held by its members, are in accordance with the written word of God.

We shall, perhaps, be told, that these doctrines and opinions are not *now* held by the Society,—at least, that they are not held *by the body*, in the manner and to the extent in which they are exhibited in the works of some of our early Friends, and in those of a succession of writers down to the present time. But, while our authorized ministers preach, while our elders uphold, and our writers defend these doctrines, it is due to the body, as well as to our common Christianity, to ascertain whether they will bear the infallible test of Holy Scripture—that authority by which alone doctrine or ministry ought to be tried. In taking my stand here, I have the high satisfaction of adopting that course which has, of late years, been strongly enforced in the “Epistles” of the Society, and which has this year, in the face of an existing doctrinal controversy, been again brought forward in the strongest manner*; by

* “They” (our forefathers) “professed to be instructed in no new truths; they had nothing to add to the faith once delivered to the saints; they cordially acknowledged the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures; they were deeply versed in the contents of the Sacred Volume; and they openly confessed that whatsoever doctrine or practice is contrary to its declarations must be accounted and reckoned a delusion of the devil.”

Having *thus* noticed the Yearly Meeting’s Epistle, it is necessary (to prevent the appearance of general approbation, which might otherwise be conveyed) to express regret that the Society should be committed to the following sentiment—namely, “We still retain the same *unalterable principles*, and desire to be enabled, under every variety of circumstance, steadily to uphold

which the body has pledged itself most solemnly, both to its individual members and to the world at large, to bring every doctrine and practice to the test of Scripture, and to esteem whatsoever is contrary to its declarations "a delusion of the devil."

Sustained in this unequivocal manner by an authorized published document of the Society, I shall enter upon my task under the cheering conviction, that, if its members are true to themselves, they will be prepared to go along with me, candidly and fearlessly, into a rigid examination of the questions at issue, and thus endeavour to ascertain how far certain views of doctrine are, or are not, accordant with the written word.

As my present object is not to defend the "Beacon," or to shew the good service which has, in my opinion, been rendered by its author to our Society, I shall confine myself to making, in this place, a very few remarks connected with it, before I enter upon the more immediate purpose which I have in view.

The title of that able work sufficiently explains its object; and when we consider that the desolating heresy, which it so clearly exposes, appears to have originated in unsound interpretations of Scripture

them." This is a very sweeping and unguarded statement. "The same unalterable principles," if applied to Christianity, is of course perfectly just; but when, from the context, we are led to refer the expression to the *principles of our Society*, it is incorrect and unsound. To speak of *those principles* as "unalterable" is a direct assumption of infallibility; and when we consider that the parties who will approve and defend this position, will refer us to Barclay and Penn as their expositors, we are compelled to disclaim such a sentiment, knowing, that, on some of the points strongly enforced by those writers, they are not supported by Scripture authority.

adopted by some of our earlier writers, who in this country also are considered as authorities, it becomes an obvious duty, with such awful experience before us, to bring these writings to the infallible test of Holy Writ. Granting, for the sake of argument only, that such errors do not in any degree obtain here, still we must be in danger, so long as the source, from which they are supposed to have sprung, is even tacitly approved or sanctioned.

But should there be reason to fear that we are not in this country wholly free from their influence, it is worthy of our serious consideration, that the *incipient* stage of a disease is only less alarming than its more advanced period because the danger is less apparent, and more distant ; and, if not checked by a judicious remedy, it will run on to its crisis, with a stealthy pace or with rapid strides, according to the circumstances under which it is operating. Now, if there be no trace of disease among us in this country,—if the body be in a healthy and vigorous condition,—why this outcry against the friendly voice that counsels us to be on our guard against its first approaches ? Why are the most uncandid imputations cast upon the excellent author of the Beacon ? Why is it to be insinuated that to bring heresy and blasphemy to the condemning light of Revelation, is no less than a “ covert ” attack upon our principles ; and that to exhibit the deplorable results in America, is to scatter the seeds of disunion here ?

There were, however, many who did apprehend that such a warning voice was needed ; and subsequent circumstances have established the correctness of that apprehension. The number is also increasing

of those who acknowledge that their doubts upon the subject arose from ignorance of the real state of things among us ; and they now see that such a recurrence to first principles—namely, the great principles of the Christian faith as once delivered to the saints, was loudly called for ; while there is yet a third class of persons, with whom the mere raising of the question has excited a kind and degree of opposition, contrasting strikingly with the Christian spirit in which it has been met.

Under these circumstances, no one will be prepared to deny, that widely differing opinions on essential points of doctrine, do prevail among us ; nor, is it easy to see how the Society is to avoid increasing disunion, unless it repudiates certain unscriptural doctrines, held by Barclay, Penn, and others, which will be adverted to in a subsequent part of this work. I come to this point in the outset, feeling that such a course is indispensable ; for, so long as they remain the accredited expositors of our faith, however their errors may now be disavowed by a large portion of the Society, we are not only justly liable to the imputation of unsoundness from without, but to the baneful influence of disunion within our pale, and may continually be cast back (as we now are by Dr. Hancock, and other writers of similar sentiments) upon their “ authority,” and taunted with a departure from our faith, if we question the validity of their claim to it.

It amounts to a mere subterfuge to say that these are not now the views of our Society, while Penn’s Works, and Barclay’s Apology, continue to be circulated from our depositories. Have they not been

sent to France, to Switzerland, to Italy, to Greece, to Germany, to Russia, and even to the islands of the South Seas? Can those Friends, who have been thus zealous in their distribution, really know what opinions they are thereby attempting to disseminate? Can they be aware that the former, in addition to much other objectionable matter, contains a tract * which, to the present day, is reprinted and circulated by the Unitarians, as a masterly defence of their doctrines; and that the latter revives the vain attempt to assimilate the Platonic philosophy with the truths of Revelation?

When we consider the peculiar circumstances of our Society in America, we shall see, in its late spiritual desolation, the natural consequences of indifference to the possession of the Scriptures †,

* It may be replied, that Penn, when told that he had given great offence to the Christian world by this unsound tract, "The Sandy Foundation Shaken," wrote another to explain it. But this made the matter almost worse; for though his object in doing it was to prove his orthodoxy, he explains himself in so halting and unsatisfactory a manner as to leave a strong impression that his views were not clear and evangelical. So notorious was the character of the tract in question, that Evelyn, the well-known author of "Sylva," makes the following entry in his Diary:—"1669. 1 Jan. About this time one of S^r W^m Pen's sons had publish'd a blasphemous book against the Deity of our blessed Lord." (Evelyn's Memoirs, 4to. 1818, vol. i. p. 396.)—I am the more impressed with these facts, from the circumstance of having been asked by a Unitarian minister, how it was that one of our ministers was, as he termed it, preaching a crusade against Unitarianism, while they considered Penn as one of their able defenders? It is, however, comforting to have reason to believe that this great man's sentiments became much more scriptural at a later period of his life.

† As a lamentable proof of this, the Friends in America almost uniformly refused to unite with their fellow-Christians in Bible Societies. And it is now evident that the Friends in America protested against the ignorant blasphemies of Elias Hicks and his deluded followers, but not against the source from which they sprang.

The awful maturity to which that frightful heresy attained

of neglect of their study, and of opposition to their authority, united with a most culpable deficiency in religious education, which generally prevailed in that country. It can therefore be no matter of surprise that doctrinal errors of the most serious character should there have taken such firm root ; or that in this country very questionable views should be held by those who, it may be feared, restrict themselves too exclusively to the writings of our early Friends.

It may be observed, in reference to the most offensive passages in general, and to the blasphemous * ones in particular, which are quoted in the "Beacon," from Hicks and his deluded disciples, that we may rejoice in the hope that there is not a minister in our Society who would unite with them. At the same time, it cannot be denied that many of the remaining passages present no unfair specimen of the style of preaching, which at one time prevailed to a fearful extent in this country, and which is now but too frequently heard.

Under such preaching, the conscience-smitten sinner who should be anxiously inquiring, "What must I do to be saved?" would in vain listen for the inspired Apostle's answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" but, on the contrary, would be directed to the "seed" within him; to the "*inward light*," which, if dwelt under and obeyed, would in due time soften and prepare his

in America, was the natural result of a degree of scriptural ignorance that is happily unknown in this country.

* Of a large proportion of these passages, (and the most shocking are not quoted in the "Beacon"), it may be most correctly said, that their depravity is only equalled by the gross ignorance they evince.

mind "by the operation of *something good*," and ultimately justify, sanctify, and everlastingly save*.

It would be difficult justly to characterize this style of preaching without being offensive. It is, however, easy to shew that it is not the preaching of the Gospel,—because it does not inculcate "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;" because it does not teach the necessity of coming in faith to the foot of the Cross, there to be delivered from the guilt and condemnation of sin; of "looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith," "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification;" because it speaks not of that mystery of redemption—"God manifest in the flesh"—"that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us" (his ministers) "the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him †." (2 Cor. v. 19—21.)

* Dr. Hancock speaks, in page 70 of the "Defence," of the operation of *something good* (in their minds) which "*gave them this faith*." The Bible says, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8); and, that "in me"—that is, in man—"dwelleth no good thing."

† It was beautifully said, by one of our true Gospel ministers of the present day, "We do not want an argumentative ministry, or an eloquent ministry: what we want, is a ministry that can break the heart and that can heal the heart—a ministry that directs the hearer to Christ; that brings him to Christ, and that leaves him there."

How sublimely simple is the scriptural scheme of salvation by faith in the Son of God, when compared with the deep and mystical philosophizings of the schoolmen! how exactly suited to the fallen and helpless condition of man! But, alas! it is too simple for his proud heart; he must have some doings or deservings whereby to merit God's favour, and come before Him with acceptance. He *will* go about to establish his own righteousness, and therefore he will not humbly and thankfully submit to be saved by the righteousness of Christ. He will strive to merit by "obedience," that which is declared to be the free "gift of God" — namely, "eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"Nothing is so opposed to the carnal wisdom of man, as preaching that the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. Truly, herein he hath made foolish the wisdom of this world. Ecclesiastical history loudly proclaims the fact, that professing Christians have sought to reach heaven by almost any other means, rather than by faith in Him whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for our sins. Sincerity of purpose, alms-giving, submission to church authority, even the persecution of heretics, and a multitude of voluntary humiliations, have been promulgated as the means whereby fallen man might entitle himself to Divine acceptance.

"In proportion as there is a turning from the great doctrine, that those who are justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, do men establish some other law for the guidance of the conscience, rather than the law of the Lord, which is perfect, converting the soul; and which, whether

revealed under the Mosaic dispensation, or ratified by the Christian, is a law of perfect love to God—truly a most reasonable service, yet one which no child of Adam has ever fully rendered to the bounteous Giver of all good.

“The peculiar danger to which Friends are exposed, is a proneness to substitute their own individual impressions of duty for the will of the Lord revealed in the Bible ; and they may thus fall into most pernicious Antinomianism. Persons who have entertained the unscriptural idea, that our duties are chiefly to be learnt by the present feeling of comfort or uneasiness, may probably find cause for deep repentance, on examining their own, thus sanctioned, deviations from the spirituality of the Divine law. Nonconformity to the customs of the world in some respects, may have taken the place which should have been filled by the faith that overcomes the world ; and, under some profession of self-denial, the love of riches may have been indulged, and the praise of men may have been eagerly sought for, solemn as is the warning of Scripture upon these points. A man may have supposed himself to be piously defending the faith, whilst indulging a carnal mind in his sectarian adherence to his favourite teachers, refusing to acknowledge the Gospel bond of brotherhood ; neither his words nor actions uttering the language, ‘ Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.’ The Scriptures teach us that all judgment is committed unto the Son of Man ; nor is there any promise that fallible mortals shall receive power to ascertain the acceptance of their brethren in His

sight, except according to the rules which He has laid down ; yet, has not many a man ventured to quiet the consciences of the living, or to console survivors respecting their deceased friends, with an assurance of the safety of individuals, where no evidence had been given of 'repentance toward God, and of faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ? ' "

STRICTURES ON MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES IN DR. HANCOCK'S DEFENCE.

BEFORE entering upon an examination of the main subjects of Dr. Hancock's "Defence"—namely, "Immediate Revelation, and Universal and Saving Light"—I propose to make a few remarks on some passages which do not properly come under either of these heads.

But I wish first to observe, that there does appear to be in that work so much that is uncandid in inference, and unjust in imputation*, in reference to the "Beacon," that one can hardly treat it in the manner it deserves without an appearance of harshness, which no one would more condemn than the amiable author who is the subject of its animadversions. This, however, involves only personal considerations; but in bringing the performance in question to the test of Scripture, no feelings of false delicacy must interfere with a rigid examination and unflinching exposure of those passages, which appear most at variance with that infallible test.

The work, taken as a whole, contains so much

* My readers will see that this is not a groundless assertion, by referring to pages 15, 16, 77, and particularly to 24, 25, where the words "traps"—"unwary"—"entrap"—"baits"—"snare"—"stratagem"—"adversaries," &c. occur; and also to page 29, where an allusion is made to "spiritual wickedness in high places."

that is unscriptural, closely interwoven with great truths about which no orthodox Christians are in doubt, and its general style is so obscure and ambiguous, that it is difficult to expose its erroneous tendencies without an appearance of opposing the truth.

Waving any notice of Dr. Hancock's insinuation, that the "Beacon" is a "covert attack upon the fundamental principles of the Society," I would observe, that in making the gratuitous assumption, that the "truth of our testimonies" is always to be taken for granted—namely, "those fundamental doctrines which have been professed by the Society of Friends ever since it was established—I mean the doctrines of Immediate Revelation and Universal Saving Light"—it appears to me that he has entirely mistaken his correct course as a Christian controversialist. For, instead of Dr. H.'s "business" being, as he states, "chiefly, if not entirely, with the question, whether his" (the author of the Beacon's) "opinions correspond with the avowed doctrines of the Society;" his first "business" certainly was, when taking part in a doctrinal controversy, to prove that the opinions to which he objects were not coincident with Holy Scripture. This is manifestly the course which he ought to have pursued, to be consistent with the avowal he makes in p. 17: "I prove my own opinion of the Holy Scriptures by the acknowledgment, as well as the fact, that I endeavour to support every one of my religious principles by their authority, and that I consider every opinion which has not their support must fall to the ground." And again, in p. 22: "Neither the opinion

of Robert Barclay, nor that of any other man, would weigh with me, if I did not consider that it was founded on a correct and enlarged view of Scripture doctrine." Yet at the same time, as if to court the charge of inconsistency, he says, in the succeeding paragraph, "I quote the Apology of Robert Barclay, concluding that one" (the author of the Beacon) "who is now a minister, in outward fellowship in the same Society with myself, can hardly be supposed to have thrown off the *authority* of a work so justly esteemed as it is amongst us; for this would imply that *his departure from the ground of our testimonies* was greater than I am yet willing to believe it to be."

Considerable stress being laid in the "Defence" upon what its author designates a departure from the true foundation, it appears important to exhibit, so far as we can gather it, what he supposes the true foundation to be, and then to state the plain doctrine of Holy Scripture; for where its declarations are clear and explicit, a Christian writer is not justified in being doubtful.

In p. 3, Dr. Hancock says, in reference to Hicksism, that he believes "the sober-minded members of our Society generally, on this side of the Atlantic, are too firmly established *on the right foundation*, to manifest any tendency to fall off into that lamentable error, which has characterised the defection of Elias Hicks."

In p. 5, when endeavouring to shew that the doctrine of Immediate Revelation is assailed, though aware that the author of the Beacon is "disposed to admit, theoretically at least, the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit," Dr. H. calls this "one of the

inconsistencies into which men are apt to fall *when they leave the true foundation.*"

In p. 16, we have the following passage :—" The principles of the Society are well known ; and though some have been ready, in every age since it was established, *to slide from the foundation*, those who are unstable in the present day, whether few or many, *will never shake the foundation itself* ; for the principles we profess are built upon the unchangeable and eternal truth of God." As the author does not declare what the " foundation " is from which some have in every age been ready to slide, and which can never be shaken by the unstable, it is impossible to estimate the correctness of this positive assertion. It is indeed true, that he tells us our principles are built upon the eternal truth of God ; but he does not add, *as revealed to us in Holy Writ* ; and we are therefore left to conjecture the meaning he may attach even to that term, which has a Neologian obscurity about it, calculated to excite suspicion. Surely Dr. Hancock must know, that the ancient philosophers of Persia, Egypt, and Greece, talked much and learnedly about " eternal truth." Christians must not, therefore, leave the sense in which they employ such terms to mere conjecture.

The next place in which " true foundation " occurs is p. 58 ; but as I shall have occasion to quote this passage subsequently, I shall now only remark, that here also we are left in entire uncertainty as to the author's meaning.

The allusions to " the foundation " in the following paragraph (pp. 77, 78) are equally obscure and objectionable. " This, if a true picture, is in itself a

ground of sorrow, and, it may be, of some discouragement: but, on the other hand, if we are persuaded *that the foundation is sure*—and after the ‘Society’ has endured such a warfare, that it might fix its habitation upon it, where is the good reason to doubt? As an individual, I have faith to believe *that this foundation will never be abandoned*, and that many will still be found to defend every testimony we uphold.”

We have thus seen that Dr. H. refers, in five distinct places, to a “right” or “true foundation;” in all of which it is impossible to discover to what foundation he refers. There is, however, a passage in pp. 40, 41, in which Dr. H. distinctly states “that the Society can only stand upon the foundation of these testimonies”—namely, “the great *doctrines*, of the invisible working of Christ’s Spirit in the heart, **AND** of Universal Saving Light.”

Though the subject of the “Saving Light” does not properly come under our consideration here, yet I cannot pass from this quotation without observing the assertions made in it; first, that Quakerism is founded upon these doctrines; and, secondly, that the “Universal Saving Light” is something distinct from the Spirit of Christ—a position which (though I admit it has the support of Barclay’s authority) I will venture to affirm Dr. H. will find it impossible to prove from Holy Scripture.

How strikingly do the obscure allusions which we have been considering, contrast with the following beautiful descriptions of the Scriptural foundation!

Isaiah says (xxviii. 16), “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a *foundation* a stone,

a tried stone, a precious corner stone, *a sure foundation.*" Now we need not doubt what this foundation is, for the Apostle Paul says (Ephesians ii. 19, 20) : "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ;*" &c. Again, in 1 Cor. iii. 11, the same Apostle says, "*other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*"

These passages can leave no shadow of doubt as to the mind of the Spirit. Are we not, therefore, justified in complaining, that any one, writing on Christian doctrine, should, on a point so clearly and explicitly stated in Scripture, leave his readers so much in the dark ? I cannot but fear that Dr. H. considers, in common with too many others, that "the true foundation" on which Quakerism is built, is not simple Bible Christianity, but a more complete unfolding of the Christian system than is contained in Holy Scripture—a notion equally dangerous and presumptuous.

The following passage occurs in p. 5, to a portion of which some allusion has already been made.

"When I say that the doctrine of Immediate Revelation is thus indirectly assailed, I am aware that the author of the 'Beacon' is fully disposed to admit, *theoretically* at least, the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. But how it is possible to reconcile the incongruity, as I deem it to be, of believing in the latter, and not fully admitting the former, is more than I am able to explain : and I think it is one of the inconsistencies into which men are apt to fall

when they leave the true foundation. For it is clear, on the author's own principles, that if Immediate Revelation be granted, it must be *conditional* altogether ; that is, dependent on the outward knowledge of Scripture or on man's preaching,—in short, that no saving light is received or manifested but through one outward medium or the other. But this never was the received doctrine of the Society, and I trust never will be received."

Is not Dr. H. deficient in Christian candour, when he thus insinuates that the author of the "Beacon" holds the doctrine of the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit only in theory, after the full declarations made by him that he holds it scripturally ?

In the next place, the author here, as in numerous other instances, seems to take for granted, as a position not in any sort to be questioned, that his business was, not to shew that certain views of Christian doctrine are conformable to Scripture authority, but that they have been always held by our Society ; and, therefore, that all those who express doubts respecting them are leaving "the true foundation." It would thus really appear as though he thought there was some peculiar and more exalted dispensation, specially manifested to our little section of the Christian church, which enforced a certain set of doctrines and opinions, in addition to the revealed will of God in Holy Scripture, and independent of its authority ; as though the point to adjust was—not, What saith the Scripture ? but—What say our early Friends ? Now I will not hesitate to declare my conviction, that this is not only dangerous in the extreme, but

utterly at variance with the Society's latest published document. It is, in fact, a modification of the Popish dogma of implicit submission to the authority of tradition.

Equally at variance with sound Protestantism is the very unguarded statement made in p. 79: "We believe that the standard we have adopted is a *fixed* one, and that as it is, we apprehend, not of our own, but of *Divine appointment*, therefore we cannot change it." And in p. 75 he informs us, that "this ultimate standard" is "the revelation of the will of God in the heart." The "fixed ultimate standard" of the Papist is vested in the infallibility of the Church: Dr. Hancock's is "of Divine appointment," and is "in the heart." The only difference, therefore, is, that the one vests infallibility in the church, the other, in the mind of each fallible man.

As a reasoner, the author of the "Defence" is singularly unhappy. "He takes for granted what he ought to have proved, and endeavours to prove what he ought to have taken for granted." He takes for granted the untenable position, that the writings of *our* ancient Fathers are to be considered, in a certain sense, as of equal authority with the written word of God; and he labours to prove positions, which a clear perception of evangelical truth would compel him to take for granted.

While there prevail in the "Defence" much confusion of ideas and ambiguity of style, when it treats on some points which to a simple Bible-Christian would be perfectly clear, there are some passages which stand out with a most painful clearness and

prominence. The following one, in p. 85, strikingly exemplifies this : " And here, I cannot but make a general remark, that, while I trust and believe that the Holy Scriptures will never cease to be regarded by the Society of Friends as *one of the greatest outward helps and blessings* (!) to aid the Christian in his course, which, by the goodness of Providence, we possess, and which, indeed, have been acknowledged as such by the ' Society,' in its ' Advices,' and by its practice, uniformly down to the present time ; nevertheless, though it does not become me to judge my neighbour, neither am I competent to say how far the ' searching of the Scriptures,' without any other help, might make a Christian of another denomination, *I am sure that searching the Scriptures alone would never make a true Quaker.*" (!)

In this extract the Holy Scriptures are spoken of as "*one of the greatest outward helps* to aid the Christian in his course," &c. Can our author point out any other " outward help " equally great ?

This is sufficiently objectionable ; but when a professing Christian, in the nineteenth century, broadly states his conviction that " searching the Scriptures alone would never make a true Quaker," and directly implies that it might make a Christian of another denomination, we feel compelled to protest against so revolting a proposition. Are we to take this statement as a commentary upon Dr. Hancock's " true foundation," on which Quakerism is built ? For if words have any definite meaning, this passage asserts that Quakerism is not built entirely on Holy Scripture ; but on Holy Scripture and something con-

junctive therewith, to constitute it "a true foundation."

On this ground, how would Dr. H. venture to enter upon a controversy with a Roman Catholic priest on the authority of the church? How could he combat the opinions of the ancient Fathers of the second and third centuries, but by giving up his own traditional views, and taking his stand on the broad, impregnable basis of the Reformation—namely, the paramount authority of Holy Scripture? Let him dare the conflict on his own mixed authority. Will not the Roman Catholic insist, and with great reason, that the *authenticated* writings and received traditions of the ancient Fathers, some of whom were contemporaries with the Apostles, and had the benefit of their oral instructions, must surely be of far greater weight and authority, than the peculiar opinions of a handful of simple and mostly unlettered men, however well-meaning and pious, who appeared in the seventeenth century? Cannot Dr. H., and those who think with him, see their danger—that, with this anti-protestant admission of the authority of something as independent of, and having equal weight with, the written word, the Jesuit would drive them, however reluctantly, to the very gates of the Vatican?

In short, give up the grand principle of the Reformation, that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants," and where is our barrier against Popery on the one hand, and fanaticism on the other? Even weaken it, by *undervaluing* the Scriptures, and by allowing them only a kind of subordinate authority, and specious errors and dangerous

doctrines will creep in, under the guise, it may be, of high spirituality, and undermine the faith of the church.

The New Testament says of the Holy Scriptures, that they "are able to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus;" but Dr. H. says, in effect, in the passage we are considering, No—they may make a man of *another denomination* wise unto salvation, but they will never make a true Quaker. And in conformity with this remarkable sentiment, and in confirmation of it, we find him asserting (p. 8), that, "if nothing but the light and knowledge of Scripture had operated upon the minds of men, then, I believe, *our religious Society never would have had an existence.* For, they" (Fox and Penn) "were taught immediately by Christ, and they directed all to Christ."

Now this is no less than an assumption of a *new revelation*, independent of, and in addition to, the revelation of the will of God in Holy Scripture,—a revival of Barclay's assertion, that "The Lord God * * * hath been pleased to reserve the *more full discovery of this glorious and evangelical dispensation to this our age.*"—(*Apology, Props. v. and vi. §. 10.*)

Thus, indeed, when men leave the true "foundation of the Apostles and Prophets," and build on any thing else, their works will sooner or later be betrayed by the sandy foundation on which they have been erected.

The more I have examined the "Defence," compared one part with another, and carefully analyzed some of its obscure and ambiguous passages, the more I have seen to disapprove in its general tone and tendency, and in the views which it attempts to

defend. Has it never occurred to Dr. Hancock, that a *first step* was wanting—namely, the *proof* of the *accordance* of Barclay with Holy Scripture? This question is certainly not an unfair one, since Dr. H. assumes that we are to defer to that author as “authority,” and at the same time desires to “rest *entirely* on the authority of Holy Scripture.”

OF IMMEDIATE REVELATION.

THE two main principles for which Dr. Hancock contends as essential to Quakerism, are "the doctrines of Immediate Revelation, and Universal and Saving Light." In considering these doctrines, my chief object will be, simply to shew that they are not, *as he states them*, in accordance with the written word of God. That they were held much in the same manner both by Barclay and Penn, I not only freely admit, but shall bring extracts from their works to prove. This, however, does not affect the question. If these doctrines are unscriptural, we, as Christians, must not retain them. My readers will therefore see, that it will not at all affect my opinions to be told, that the views, now so strenuously brought out into unwonted prominence by Dr. Hancock, are those of Penn and Barclay. Great men they were—learned men—illustrious in their day—men eminent for piety, virtue, high honour, unflinching courage, unblemished reputation. They adopted with youthful ardour the spiritual views of the early Friends; and, excited by the heroic courage and Christian fortitude with which they bore up against the cruel and vulgar persecution of their day, they stood up in the breach like veteran champions; and, young as they were, each, in his own peculiar sphere, acted the part of a David against the Goliath of oppression.

But they were both *schoolmen*; their theological treatises were respectively written when both were very young, fresh from college, and full of the Scholastic Theology of their day. They systematized the mass of crude materials before them; and, carrying out some doctrines, at that day much overlooked by many religious professors, into undue because exclusive prominence, and sustaining their views of others by restricted interpretations of insulated passages of Scripture, they not only threw into the shade doctrines both true and essential, but sought to defend their particular views, less by the New Testament, than by the Christian Fathers and the Heathen Philosophers.

In reference to the doctrine of "Immediate Revelation," to which subject Dr. Hancock devotes (professedly) thirteen pages: he appears chiefly to be contending against certain errors and misconceptions, which really have no existence but in his own fearful apprehensions; for, allowing, as every candid mind would wish to do, that by his questionable term, "Immediate Revelation," he only means to describe the Scriptural doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit, as promised to all believers, and most especially to those who may be called to labour in word and doctrine, there remains little to object against; though a certain interpretation of some of his expressions here, and more especially the following quotations from an earlier part of his work, would involve opinions widely differing from the scriptural doctrine—

"Now, while I believe in the unanswerable soundness of Robert Barclay's Propositions, that 'Inward,

immediate, objective revelation, is the only sure, certain, and immovable foundation of all Christian faith,' and also 'that the principal rule of Christians under the gospel is not an outward letter, but an inward, spiritual law; therefore the letter of Scripture is not, nor can be, the chief or principal rule of Christians.'"—(*Defence*, pp. 9, 10.)

* * "and consequently does not believe in the doctrine of the Society, which I believe to be the pure doctrine deducible from the Scriptures themselves, that, 'Because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself; therefore they (the Scriptures) are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and knowledge, nor yet the adequate primary 'rule of faith and manners.'"
—(*Defence*, p. 10.)

Those who are conversant with the frightful heresies which arose, even in the Apostolic and early age of the Christian church, from an overstrained interpretation of this great doctrine, and a consequent claim to "inspiration," will be prepared to view with Christian jealousy any approach to those extravagant claims to it, which not only harassed the church in that primitive age, but from which have arisen the most fatal heresies of the Greek and Romish churches. If such claims to "inspiration" are allowed in this age of the church, how can we deny them to the Apostolical and early Fathers? and if we concede their right to them, on what ground of fair dealing can we reject those heretical doctrines originating in and clearly deducible from their writings?

"The Epistles of Clement and Barnabas were probably written before the canon of the New Testament

was completed, and consequently their views of Christianity were derived, in a measure, from the oral instructions of the Apostles. Yet, it is remarkable, that they never claim any *authority* for these instructions : their authoritative appeals are invariably to the Scriptures, generally of the Old Testament : they plead no other justification either of their doctrinal or ethical opinions * ; " while a " bold avowal of Inspiration is made in favour of a tissue of obscenity and absurdity which would disgrace the Hindoo Mythology ; though, in the same Epistle the writer entirely disclaims it for the very pious and scriptural train of reasoning with which he commences †."

How instructive is it to remark, that " when they write scripturally they declare that they are not inspired, while they claim inspiration for that which is so utterly at variance with all conceivable rules of Scriptural interpretation, and with the whole tenor of the sacred volume, that it condemns itself ! ‡ "

" Ignatius," who suffered martyrdom at the commencement of the second century, " makes a similar general disclaimer of inspiration. He experienced no necessity for it so long as his sentiments were in accordance with the teaching of the Apostles ; but when he inculcates his wild, extravagant notions of subjection to the Christian hierarchy, he becomes inspired §."

* " Doctrinal Errors of the Apostolical and Early Fathers. By W. Osburn, jun." London : Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 1835. p. 20.

† Ibid. p. 25. ‡ Ibid. p. 26. § Ibid. p. 25.

These facts are indeed beacons to us. Who shall say that the Christian church in the nineteenth century does not need a caution so evidently required in the first? No claim to the teachings of the Holy Spirit can be allowed, by any Christian community, to that which is not "in accordance with the teaching of Christ and his Apostles." Without this unerring test to which to refer all ministrations, where has the Christian church a safe barrier against any degree of error or fanaticism? Have we not some of us, even *recently*, heard the highest claims to inspiration made for communications in direct opposition to the doctrines and precepts of Christ and his Apostles? While, on the other hand, it is observable, that from our truly anointed evangelical ministers we hear nothing of such unscriptural claims.

"The history of the professing church of Christ, now continued through more than eighteen centuries, affords many humbling proofs, that the moment we add any thing to the religion of the New Testament, or take any thing away from it, that moment we injure its structure and weaken its effect. The doctrines of revealed religion came forth from the hands of their Author and his immediate followers, in a state of perfection, and the concentrated wisdom of ten thousand philosophers and theologians can change them, only for the worse*."

We have seen that these unscriptural claims to inspiration are not new in the Christian church; and we know also, that before the coming of our

* "Hints on the portable Evidence of Christianity, by Joseph John Gurney," p. 158.

Lord, the Jewish doctors had, as he Himself declared, "made the word of God of none effect by their tradition:" indeed, to so awful an extent was it carried, that they even affirmed their traditions to be superior to the written word*. The Roman Catholic church, by admitting the authority of tradition †, opened the flood-gates through which error and heresy deluged for centuries Catholic Europe. Very similar also, in some of its leading features, is that heresy which has of late years spread so widely among Evangelical Christians, chiefly within the pale of the Established Church. The followers of Irving place the impressions of the Spirit on the minds of believers above the authority of Scripture. This has drawn aside into great extravagance men eminent for piety and holy walking.

The gist of the whole question seems to lie in a narrow compass, and may be thus stated:—Those who contend for the supreme authority of spiritual influence in the minds of Christians, say, "that which gave forth the Scriptures must be superior to the Scriptures." Now, in strictness, no one can deny this position; but do these persons forget, that it is *not* the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures which are placed in competition, but the miraculously attested revelation of truth contained in the Scriptures, and individual impressions on the minds of fallible men? If the paramount authority of Scripture ("given," as all Christians acknowledge it to be, "by inspiration of God") be denied, where is the test by which any church can safely try its ministers?

* Lightfoot. † See the Articles of the Romish Church.

Let us never forget that Inspired Apostles refer to the "lively oracles" as the voice of the Holy Ghost. Thus in Heb. iii. 7 : "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice," &c. ; and, ix. 8, "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest."

The Sacred Writings contain all things necessary to salvation ; and they no where authorize the Christian church to expect a new revelation. Our Blessed Lord himself has put abundant honour upon the written word, by his continual reference to its authority. To pass over the multitude of instances in which he answers inquiries, enforces precepts, sets forth doctrine, and repels the tempter, in the words of Scripture,—how striking is that ever memorable interview between Him and his two disconsolate disciples going to Emmaus ! Instead of making any new revelation to them *, he "opened unto them the Scriptures." Luke xxiv. 27 : "Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." And, as the awful and ultimate sanction of their Divine authority, at the consummation of all things—when the universe shall be rolled together as a scroll ; when the trumpet shall sound,

* In the most recently printed document of our Society, we declare that "our forefathers professed to be instructed in *no new truths*;" that "they had nothing to add to the *faith once delivered to the saints*." We, as Friends, are therefore fully authorized in rejecting, as spurious and unsound, all ministrations which do not accord with the spirit and teaching of Christ and his Apostles : and as the prayerful and diligent study of Holy Scripture increases amongst us, the body at large will be better prepared to distinguish between the legitimate and the spurious.

and the dead shall be raised to judgment — then shall he that believeth not be judged by the words which Jesus spake. John xii. 47, 48 : “ And if any man hear my words, and believe not.....the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.”

UNIVERSAL AND SAVING LIGHT.

I NOW come to an important portion of my task ; and in entering upon it I will not give any candid reader the opportunity to misinterpret my opinions, or to charge me with not holding certain doctrines which are common to evangelical Christians generally, and which are clearly deducible from Holy Writ. To that ever-blessed doctrine, of the entire fulness and freeness of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus to our ruined race ; of the infinite sufficiency of the blood of the Atonement ; of the expiatory offering of our ever-adorable Saviour on the cross, as a full and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world ;—to this blessed doctrine I most cordially subscribe ; and what human heart can ever comprehend the depth of the love—the value of the offering ! But the Bible instructs me (Deut. xxix. 29), that “ the *secret things* belong unto the LORD our God : but those things *which are revealed* belong unto us and to our children for ever.”

We have nothing to do with His mysterious will concerning the world at large, or concerning the heathen world in particular. It is not for finite man to estimate the hidden purposes of the infinite mind, or to set limits to the immeasurable love of God. The simple declaration, “ Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? ” is sufficient for the humble be-

liever, who, not seeking to be wise "above that which is written," is willing to receive in simple faith that which is revealed, and to leave that which is not revealed as belonging unto God. "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few." (Eccles. v. 2.)

We are, however, plainly told, that "the whole world lieth in wickedness;" that it is become "guilty before God;" that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Equally clear is the command of Christ—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20); to which he added the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," to shew that the command he had given was one of perpetual obligation.

As the most convenient mode, and to avoid the necessity of repetition, I shall now cite certain passages from Barclay, Penn, and Dr. Hancock, and then proceed to remark upon them.

Barclay (Propositions v. and vi. § 13.)—"By this seed, grace, and word of God, and light; wherewith we say, Every one is enlightened and hath a measure of it, which strives with him, in order to save him, and which may, by the stubbornness and wickedness of man's will, be quenched, bruised, wounded, pressed down, slain, and crucified; we understand not the proper essence and nature of God, precisely taken; which is not divisible into parts and measures, as

being a most pure, simple being, void of all composition or division, and therefore can neither be resisted, hurt, wounded, crucified, or slain, by all the efforts and strength of men: but we understand a *spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells*; a measure of which Divine and glorious life is in all men, as a seed which of its own nature draws, invites, and inclines to God; and this some call *vehiculum Dei*, or the spiritual body of Christ, the flesh and blood of Christ, which came down from heaven; of which all the saints do feed, and are thereby nourished unto eternal life. And as every unrighteous action is witnessed against and reprov'd by this light and seed, so by such actions it is hurt, wounded, and slain, and flees from.....that which is of a contrary nature to it. Now because it is never separated from God nor Christ, but wherever it is *God and Christ are as wrapped up therein*; therefore, and in that respect, as it is resisted, God is said to be resisted, and where it is borne down, God is said to be pressed, as a cart under sheaves; and Christ is said to be slain and crucified. And, on the contrary, as this seed is received in the heart, and suffered to bring forth its natural and proper effect, Christ comes to be formed and raised, of which the Scripture makes so much mention, calling it the new man; Christ within, the hope of glory. This is that *Christ within*, which we are heard so much to speak and declare of, every where preaching him up, and exhorting people to believe in the light, and obey it, that they may come to know Christ in them, to *deliver them from all sin.*"

§ 14. "We understand not this seed, light, or grace, to be an *accident*, as most men ignorantly do, but a real spiritual *substance*, which the soul of man is capable to feel and apprehend; from which that real, spiritual, inward birth in believers arises, called the new creature, the new man in the heart." "We know it to be a *substance*, because it subsists in the hearts of wicked men, even while they are in their wickedness," &c.

The following are from William Penn's Works (vol. i. p. 574, folio edit. 1726).—"And as at any time disobedient men have hearkened to the still voice of the Word, that messenger of God in their hearts, to be affected and convinced by it, as it brings reproof for sin, which is but a fatherly chastisement; so, upon true brokenness of soul and contrition of spirit, that very same *Principle* and Word of Life in man has *mediated* and *atoned*, and God has been propitious, lifting up the light of his countenance, and replenishing such humble penitents with Divine consolations. So that still the same Christ, Word-God, who has lighted all men, is by sin grieved and burdened, and bears the iniquities of such as so sin and reject his benefits. But as any hear his knocks and let him into their hearts, he first wounds, and then heals: *afterwards* he *atones*, *mediates*, and *re-instates* man in the holy image he has fallen from by sin. Behold, this is the state of restitution! And this, in some measure, was witnessed by the holy patriarchs, prophets, and servants of God in old time, to whom Christ was substantially the same Saviour, the Seed bruising the serpent's head, that he is now to us, what difference soever there may be in point of manifestation."

From *Dr. Hancock's "Defence."*—"Now I have two reasons for quoting the *authority* of Robert Barclay. First, because I believe that his arguments remain not only unrefuted, but unanswerable," &c. "Secondly, I quote the Apology of Robert Barclay, concluding that one who is now a minister, in outward fellowship in the same Society with myself, can hardly be supposed to have thrown off the *authority* of a work so justly esteemed as it is amongst us; for this would imply that his" (the author of the Beacon's) "departure from *the ground of our testimonies* was greater than I am yet willing to believe it to be." (p. 22.)

"If there were not this seed, or gift, or talent, placed within us, the discovery of Divine truth *never could be made congenial to us*, because there would be nothing by which it could be received, and to which it could be assimilated." (p. 20.)

"If it be right to call that a principle which we believe to be a *spiritual substance*." (p. 45.)

"I have before alluded to the notion that *something* has been placed in the human heart, without which it would scarcely be reasonable, or according to analogy, to expect that any good thing, such as truth or virtue, could be received and substantially appropriated, so as to make a saving impression," &c. (p. 61.)

"It might, indeed, be a question with many, whether it was first implanted by our blessed Saviour when he was in the world, and by the Apostles in his name afterwards, or had a previous existence from the beginning." (p. 62.)

"Some had faith in him (Christ) and some had it not:—some, in fact, were softened and prepared in

their minds previously, by *the operation of something good*, which gave them this faith." (p. 70.)

Thus we see that this "Universal and Saving Light" is, according to Barclay, "a spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells"—"a *vehiculum Dei*." It is not the Father, it is not the Son, it is not the Holy Spirit, it is not "an accident;" but "a real spiritual substance," in which "God and Christ are as wrapped up*."

"It is universal and saving."—Now that which is universal and saving, must be of God; nothing short of Deity can save. "I, even I, am Jehovah; and beside me there is no Saviour" (Isa. xliii. 11). It therefore follows, as it is not God, but a "principle, in which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwells," that Barclay sets up the monstrous notion of a *fourth* manifestation of Deity! Now in all Christian candour I can see no fair escape from this conclusion. Are we to be burdened with this mystical incubus, and to be liable to be cast back upon this Platonic doctrine by almost every expositor of our principles?

Thus did the very men, who so dreaded and decried all theological terms of human devising, that they rejected the word "Trinity" because not found in

* To those who incline to investigate the subject, a very striking analogy will be found to exist between this mystical notion and the Popish doctrine of *transubstantiation* (see Appendix A); and it is remarkable that Barclay adopts, almost verbatim, the terms of the Council of Trent—viz. after describing the process, they say the bread then becomes a principle in which God dwells, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Where is Scripture authority for either?

Holy Writ, revive in the seventeenth century the mysticism * of the ancient Greek philosophizing Fathers, who too successfully strove to graft Christianity on the Platonic philosophy †, and thus gave rise to numerous errors, the more dangerous because they flattered the proud, unregenerate heart of man ; —errors which find their support, not in the written word of God, but in the occult mysteries of Heathen philosophy, and are only to be expressed in terms of human devising ‡. Try the doctrine as stated by Barclay, Penn, and others, by the written word of God, and the whole falls to pieces like a rope of sand.

The ineffectual efforts of the human mind in its highest state of intellectual attainment and philosophical enlightenment,—its agonizings to reach forth after the hidden treasures of the highest good,—are affecting proofs of man's loss by the Fall, and of the truth of the testimony of Holy Writ, that, in its degenerate state of mental darkness and perversion, "the world by *wisdom* knew not God !"

Now if the knowledge of God and of His law could have been attained by the reachings forth of

* I refer my readers to the Appendix B—article, "Notes on Mysticism," by my friend John Eliot Howard—for a more full exposition of the origin of mysticism in the Christian church ;—an article which is well worth an attentive perusal.

† "Clement of Alexandria declares the *Divine origin* of the Eclectic philosophy." "He assigned a measure of inspiration to the Greek poets."—"Justin Martyr, and his pupil Athenagoras, both entertained the same opinion."—"Clement dearly loved the Greek philosophy, and the design of nearly all his (remaining) works is to harmonize the Eclectic system to that of Christianity."—(*Doctrinal Errors*, pp. 32, 33, 157.)

‡ *Doctrinal Errors*, p. 88: "There is not a more copious source of inconvenience and error than these departures from Scripture phraseology, in treating upon matters whereof we know nothing but from thence."

philosophy, the disciples of the "Divine Plato," as he has been called, would have been likely to attain unto it; but the most simple, unlettered Christian, and the humble Sabbath-school child, with the Bible in their hands, stand superior to the most erudite disciple of the Grove or the Academy, and are able to explain things which to him were utterly inexplicable.

Is it not well worthy of serious investigation, whether here, as on other points, Friends have not adopted confused notions in consequence of a want of simple and implicit reference to Holy Scripture? Have they not in this case, at least in words, if not in intention, mixed up confusedly the blessed doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit, as promised to believers, with an indefinite "something"—"an inward light"—"a heavenly and invisible principle"—"a substance"—"a holy seed?" If the Holy Spirit, whether designated as the Spirit, the Spirit of God, or the Spirit of Christ, be intended by these terms, then the doctrine of Scripture respecting His presence and influences is clear and explicit: if something else be meant, where is the authority of Scripture on which it rests?

It is remarkable, that there is no such term in Holy Scripture as "Universal and Saving Light," "Universal Light," or "Saving Light;" but these terms, like some others equally unscriptural, have been so long current among us, that many, I doubt not, believe they are to be found in the New Testament: and have we not here a practical illustration of the evil resulting from the use of conventional terms on points of doctrine?

The passage of Scripture on which the defenders

of this doctrine lay the greatest stress is, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John i. 9). I may here remark, that commentators entertain different opinions as to its right interpretation, and, among other reasons, because the words "all" and "every," when used in Scripture, have often a limited signification. Thus Christ says, "The Law and the Prophets were until John : since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and *every man* presseth into it" (Luke xvi. 16). But even taking the passage (John i. 9) in its literal interpretation, it affords no support to the strange doctrine of Barclay. It is stated by the Apostle, most unequivocally, that the Light of which he speaks was Christ. Now Barclay says as expressly, that his "light" is a spiritual, heavenly, invisible principle, a "*vehiculum Dei*," in which "God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells,"—"a substance,"—"a holy seed."

In the following passages, it is worthy of remark that the term "light," though alluded to in different ways, and with various significations, is almost invariably spoken of as that which is to be communicated in mercy. "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke ii. 32). "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles" (Isa. xlix. 6). And "The Gentiles shall come to thy light" (Isa. lx. 3). "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light : they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isa. ix. 2) : namely, by the coming of Christ. "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light" (Ps. cxviii. 27). "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord : walk as children of the light" (Eph. v. 8) ; and in verse 14, "Awake, thou

that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light." Again : " He stumbleth because there is no light in him " (John xi. 10). How could this possibly be the case if a measure of light were in all men ? " While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light " (John xii. 36) : and if we inquire, What light ? we have the reply, " I (Jesus Christ) am come a light into the world." — " But now are ye light in the Lord : walk as children of light," &c. (Eph. v. 8). " That ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His " (Christ's) " marvellous light " (1 Pet. ii. 9).

If, according to Barclay, the saving light were in all men as a seed, what are we to suppose the Apostle could mean by believers in Christ being thus called " out of darkness into his marvellous light ? "

Again : " O send out thy light and thy truth : let them lead me " (Ps. xliii. 3) : and, " Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee " (Isa. lx. 1). If already possessed by all, the Psalmist could hardly have prayed for its being sent forth, or the Prophet exclaim, " Arise, shine, for thy light is come."

That this unscriptural doctrine owes its origin in the Christian church to the Platonizing of some of the Apostolical Fathers, and to its affinity with the emanative system of the most ancient Indian, Persian, Egyptian, and Greek Philosophers, from whom they derived it, is too clear and striking to require further illustration than will be afforded in the Appendix, before referred to, and in the Notes ; but it may be well to observe generally, that the notion

of Eons, or manifestations of wisdom, light, life, &c., was the ineffectual reaching forth of mere human philosophy after the hidden mysteries of the Divine Nature, in its diverse operations, both in man and in the universe. The Apostle John, who appears to have had particularly in view the refutation of these philosophizing errors, adopts a course at once natural and conclusive. Many of the passages, so strongly insisted on as containing these mystical doctrines, seem to have been directed especially against them ; and they are in fact so many antitheses. The celebrated critic Michaelis says, " In the Gnostic system, Light, as well as Life, was a *separate being*, which gave intelligence to the mind, as Life gave vigour and motion to the body. This is denied by St. John, who asserts that the Word was the Light, that is, *the giver of light*.....The proofs of this position are the passages in the 8th and 9th chapters, where Christ calls himself the Light *."

The origin of this emanative system being traceable to the metaphysical philosophy of the earliest ages, it is natural enough that it should be found, under various modifications, in every quarter of the globe. It is no matter of surprise, but rather a simple collateral proof of the wide spread of that system at a very early period.

These philosophical views, when grafted on Christianity, seem naturally to bear the poisonous fruit of *fanaticism* or *infidelity*. The early history of our own Society † affords instances of the one ; and the

* Marsh's Michaelis, vol. iv: p. 293.

† Those who are conversant with the early history of Friends, will not wish for the production of authorities for this assertion.

Neologians * of Germany, and the Freethinkers of Geneva and France, are awful proofs of the other.

Thus we have endeavoured to shew, that *on this point* Barclay's views are unscriptural. They have notwithstanding been continually defended, by almost all our writers, down to Dr. Hancock. It avails not, therefore, for us now to be told that Barclay's sentiments are no longer held by our Society; that by "Universal and Saving Light" we now mean the Spirit of Christ †, or the Holy Spirit: it may be so or not; but does this affect the question? Barclay is our accredited Apologist; and until an expurgated edition of his book is published, we must not complain if the world call us unsound; and is it not the duty of every Evangelical Friend to protest against his "authority?"

A very striking illustration of the manner in which one error leads to another, is afforded by the author of the "Defence," in some allusions which he makes to the present state of the Heathen who have never heard the Gospel. His unscriptural notion of the Universal and Saving Light, has drawn him into the

* "Of the German school of metaphysical religionists, it may be said that their 'sanctus recessus mentis'—that stately temple of the human heart, which Revelation teaches us 'is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked'—is, according to their perverted theology, the fountain-head of religion—the sacred recess of the oracles of philosophy. * * * Where has this new philosophy found the 'vie interieure' (inward life), the 'sens interieur' (inward sense), or that truth so palatable to unregenerate, proud man, 'que l'homme est bon par nature'?"—(*Christian Gentleman.*)

† That the most recent of our writers, who takes Barclay's view of the question, considers the "Saving Light" as distinct from the Spirit of Christ, will be seen by a passage quoted in p. 17, in which the author of the Defence speaks of "the great doctrines, of the invisible working of Christ's Spirit, in the heart, AND of Universal Saving Light."

strange and pernicious error of representing their spiritual condition and advantages as being influenced by the coming of Christ in the flesh. This is clearly implied, if not expressed, in the following quotations:—

P. 9: "I cannot admit that *mankind, universally*, in this Gospel day, are placed at *greater disadvantage*, with regard to an immediate access to the Throne of Grace, than were the *Jews* before the coming of the Messiah."

P. 44: "But the words 'kingdom of heaven' must be understood, in this case, to mean the *dawn* or principle of everlasting glory, with which the hearts of men were visited in this life, for their deliverance from the bondage of sin and darkness, by the appearance of Jesus Christ,—*outwardly* to the Jews in the days of his flesh, but *inwardly* both to them and to the Gentiles by his free Spirit."

P. 62: "It might, indeed, be a question with many, whether it" (the Universal and Saving Light existing in its 'unevolved, unquickened state') "*was first implanted* by our blessed Saviour when he was in the world, and *by the Apostles*, in His name, *afterwards*, or *had a previous existence from the beginning*."

Thus, while Dr. Hancock is perfectly satisfied that *all mankind* have now this "Universal Saving Light," he seems in doubt whether *any one* had it before the coming of Christ in the flesh. I take this to be the key to our author's strange error. Following in the steps of Penn and Barclay, he assumes that all men are *now* in the *same* condition, as living in the Gospel day, whether they have heard the Gospel preached outwardly or not. Now, as Christians under the

Gospel Dispensation are of course in the enjoyment of higher spiritual privileges than the Jews possessed under the Legal Dispensation, and as the Heathen now (according to Dr. H.) have the same privileges with Christians, one of two things must necessarily follow ; either, first, the Heathen were superior in this respect to the Jews before the coming of Christ ; or, secondly, their spiritual privileges are greater since His coming, than they were before. I infer from the Doctor's expressions (p. 9), that he was aware of this alternative consequence of his theory, and that he chose the second rather than the first. It is difficult to say which alternative is most erroneous, while his whole theory is utterly destitute of Scriptural support.

In conformity with the sentiments I have before expressed, I shall not offer here any lengthened observations upon that most interesting subject the state of the Heathen, and the consequent duties of the Christian Church. Leaving Dr. H. to reconcile the difficulties of his own ill-supported theory, I would, however, venture to declare my firm persuasion, that in proportion to our estimate of the large blessings of the Gospel, will be our desire to participate in the duty and the privilege of communicating it to the Heathen—to those who emphatically “ have not known God,” who “ have not called on his name,” who “ sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,” whose “ dark places are full of the habitations of cruelty.”

In connexion with the above remarks, I feel that it is due to our common Christianity, and to the great cause of the spread of the Gospel, to declare

my unqualified disapproval of the whole tendency of a series of observations contained in the "Defence," and which have reference to the same subject.

I feel that this is also due to those truly evangelical labours of love so successfully prosecuting by Christians of almost every name, and which have been so eminently blessed by the conversion of multitudes, as seals to the efficacy of the preached Gospel.

In p. 51 Dr. Hancock says: "In accordance with what has been said, it is clear to my view, that there is a powerful influence arrayed in the present day, to assert and to support the notion of the superior efficacy of what man has power to do, above that which Christ, the supreme Head of the church, is conceived to be willing to do, for the enlargement of his own kingdom. Because, if the principle, that Christ can and will teach his true followers Himself, were generally allowed, and His Spirit in the heart were more universally obeyed, the efforts of man, in so far as they are supported by unhallowed motives and means, and are not under the appointment of Christ himself, would be found grievously wanting, and therefore would be set aside," &c.

What does Dr. Hancock mean by this uncharitable insinuation? All Evangelical Christians acknowledge that no preaching of the Gospel is likely to convert sinners to God, but that which is delivered under the authority and influence of the Holy Spirit; and have we not *proof*, in the success of Missionary labours, that they have been sanctioned and blessed by Him, and are therefore manifestly "under the appointment of Christ himself?"

JUSTIFICATION, AND CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

INTIMATELY connected with Barclay's Platonic hypothesis of the "seed and birth of God in the soul," as a distinct being or "substance," "*vehiculum Dei*," and indeed but too naturally arising out of it, are his equally unscriptural views on the all-important point of Justification; as will be seen by the following quotation from "The Apology." The succeeding passages from Penn will shew that he adopted the same unscriptural view.

Barclay (Prop. vii. § 3): — "It is this inward birth in us, bringing forth righteousness and holiness in us, that doth justify us."

"And by this nearness we come to have a sense of His" (Christ's) "sufferings, and to suffer with His seed, that yet lies pressed and crucified in the hearts of the ungodly; and so travail with it, and for its" (the seed's) "*redemption*, and for the repentance of those souls that in it are crucifying, as yet, the Lord of Glory."

§ 6: "And, indeed, it may be thought strange how some men have made this" (imputative righteousness) "so fundamental an article of their faith, which is so contrary to the whole strain of the Gospel; — a thing which Christ, in none of all his sermons and gracious speeches, ever willed any to rely upon;

always recommending to us works as instrumental in our justification."

§ 7: "It is by this inward birth, or Christ formed within, that we are (so to speak) formally justified in the sight of God."

§ 3: *** "Yet we believe that such works as naturally proceed from this spiritual birth, and formation of Christ in us, are pure and holy, even as the root from which they come; and therefore God accepts them, justifies us in them, and rewards us for them, of his own free grace."

From *Penn's Christian Quaker*.—Chap. xvii.: "The light of Christ within, is the efficient cause of salvation completely taken."

Chap. xiv.: "Christ indeed fulfils the law for us; but how? The light in us, *as we are subject to it*, and led by it, administers an holy power, by which we are enabled to do that which is good and acceptable in the sight of the Lord; and so, *obeying the light*, we fulfil the law. 'Thus He works his works in us and for us.'"

Chap. xviii.: "I say, this" (the light) "*is the efficient cause of salvation*; and all other exterior visitations and ministries of assistance, though from the same light, are, in respect of the light in every single man or woman, but instrumental and secondary." (!)

From "*A Serious Apology*" (Penn's Works, Ed. 1726, vol. ii. p. 66).—"Justification by the righteousness which Christ hath fulfilled in his own person for us, wholly without us....this, we deny, and boldly affirm it, *in the name of the Lord*, to be the doctrine of devils, and an arm of the sea of corruption, which does now deluge the whole world." (!!)

I feel that these passages will carry conviction of their unscriptural character to the mind of every Christian. It will be seen by them, and more clearly and fully by a reference to the works from whence they are taken, that "as many as resist not this light, but receive the same, it becomes in them" a holy birth, by the minding of which we are to be *accepted, sanctified, and justified* in the sight of God; the same "principle" having first "*mediated and atoned.*" These are the doctrines of Barclay and Penn, springing from their unscriptural notions of "Universal and Saving Light." The doctrine of Christ and his Apostles is—that *Christ* "is the One Mediator between God and man"—that by Him "we have now received the *atonement*"—that we are "*accepted*" in Him, "*the beloved*"—that we are *justified* by faith in Him, and *sanctified* by the Holy Ghost.

We are told by these authors, that it is by attending to the Light, and by *obedience* to it, that justification is to be accomplished; and therefore it is evident, that those who adopt this scheme place themselves voluntarily under the covenant of works. Now, since there are but two covenants—the one of faith, the other of works—such can have no claim to "all joy and peace in believing;" for it is undeniable that, in their view, joy and peace are to be obtained, not by the Apostolic mode of "*believing**," but by "*obedience*" to the "*inward light*" or "*birth*;"—not by a willing renunciation of all self-righteous-

* It is very striking, that the terms "faith," "believe," "believing," &c., which so frequently occur in the Bible, are very rarely to be found in the works either of Barclay or Penn.

ness, and a thankful acceptance of the "righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ," but by a preparation and purification of heart by obedience to this "light," whereby, as a consequence, sanctification and justification are to proceed "*pari passu*." And Barclay further says, that he "will not affirm that a state is not attainable in this life, in which to do righteousness may be *so natural* to the regenerate soul, that in the stability of that condition he *cannot sin*" (*Barclay*, Prop. viii. § 2).

Those who desire thus to live under the covenant of works—that is to say, to be debtors to do the *whole* law—ought seriously to consider, that, according to the Apostle James, "he who offends in one point is guilty of all;" and that the Apostle Paul says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). They ought also to reflect on the awful consequences of thus setting at nought the very purpose for which our blessed Saviour died—namely, that he might redeem "us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13); thereby "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. ii. 14).

According to the Scripture, "all" are "concluded under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. iii. 22); whereby God "might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26).

What shall we think of Barclay's unsupported assumption, that this "so fundamental an article of

their faith, is so contrary to the whole strain of the Gospel,—a thing which Christ, in none of all his sermons and gracious speeches, *ever willed any to rely on* ;” when we find the whole scheme of redemption, as revealed from Genesis to Revelation, hinging upon it ; when we find, contrary to his direct and unguarded denial, our Saviour himself thus setting it forth : “ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up ; that *whosoever believeth in him* should not perish, but have eternal life ” (John iii. 14, 15).

To this citation might be added a multitude of others, particularly in the 6th chapter of the same Gospel, where our Lord’s words are most pointed and conclusive. But what language can be stronger than his declaration to the woman who “ stood at his feet, behind him, weeping ? ” Jesus said to her, “ *Thy faith hath saved thee* ; go in peace ! ”

“ By the works of the law ”—or by obedience (for they are synonymous terms)—“ shall no flesh be justified ” (Gal. ii. 16) ; while nothing can be clearer, from the testimony of Scripture, than the doctrine of justification by faith. The ritual observances of the Mosaic Dispensation were typical of this great doctrine. The wretched scheme of salvation which we have been considering, amounts, in plain terms, to this—that man is to obey the “ Inward Light ” to the best of his ability ; and then to depend upon the great Expiatory Sacrifice to make up his deficiency !

“ Some call him a Saviour in word,
But mix their own works with his plan ;
And hope He his help will afford,
When they have done all that they can.

" If doings prove rather too light
 (A little they own they may fail),
 They purpose to make up full weight,
 By casting His Name in the scale."

That Dr. Hancock adopts Barclay's unscriptural view on this essential point, will be seen by the following citations from his "Defence," and also by the tendency of a variety of observations in that work, not immediately bearing on the doctrine.

In p. 38 we have the following passage :—" Hence it is necessary to shew that justification by faith in the atoning sacrifice is *incomplete* without holiness, wrought by the Holy Spirit in the heart," &c.

Justification, according to the New Testament, is in itself *complete*, for "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28), "even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. iv. 6). But in the absence of holiness there is *no justification at all*; for, since faith and holiness are inseparable, without holiness there can be no true faith. Thus the Apostle James* says: "I will *shew* thee my faith by my works." Faith being an abstract principle *in the heart*, its existence can only be *shewn* by the evidence of good fruits. Thus

* This Apostle appears to have had the *then* Antinomian heresy in his eye, and his Epistle, rightly considered, greatly strengthens our argument, by following out the idea that no faith can be justifying but living faith; that no faith can be living which is not productive of its fruits; and that its fruits are the external evidences of its existence. Thus in ii. 14, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" Can this spurious faith, this dead profession, save him?

the Christian evidences his faith by his works, while it is faith alone which justifies him in the sight of God ; "for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." For, however the Antinomian hypocrite may "lay the flattering unction to his soul," faith *can never exist* without being evidenced by good works. "Let us not delude ourselves" (says Archbishop Leighton *) ; "if we find the love of sin and of the world work stronger in our hearts than the love of Christ, we are not as yet partakers of his redemption." And the same author beautifully represents the Christian exclaiming "His matchless love hath freed me from the miserable captivity of sin, and hath for ever fastened me to the sweet yoke of his obedience †."

Again Dr. Hancock says (p. 57): "Supposing, then, that the atoning sacrifice *were* enough for the sinner, under circumstances of an unusual extension of Divine mercy, to justify him freely before God, is it to be concluded that it is in itself altogether sufficient for the *saint*?"

Can this sentence be correctly printed? It is difficult to believe that any attentive reader of the New Testament could seriously ask such a question. That these sentiments of Dr. H. have no scriptural authority we may safely aver; and is it not almost

* Commentary on the 1st Epistle of Peter, i. 18, 19.

† That venerable Christian, Rowland Hill, used to say: "If we love God, we must necessarily love that holy law which is a transcript of his Divine mind and will. Some people will tell you, that, if you will gain Heaven, you must pass through a self-denying course of the practice of virtue and obedience. They make religion *house-of-correction work*. No, no! I love the service of my God. Like the bird, I fly at liberty, on the wings of my obedience, to do His will."—(*Sidney's Life of Rowland Hill.*)

equally clear that they have been obtained from the writings of Barclay and Penn, or others holding similar opinions?

The atoning sacrifice "enough for the *sinner*!" and is it "altogether sufficient for the *saint*?" Who is not a sinner?—and who is a saint? According to our author, there are some, who before benefiting by the atoning sacrifice, are *saints*. If saints (holy), will he tell us why they require any atoning sacrifice? How distressing it is to read, from the pen of a professing Christian, such a question put hypothetically! "Supposing, then, that the atoning sacrifice were enough for the sinner!"—even this is not "taken for granted." But Scripture says that the great atoning, expiatory sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross, was sufficient for the sins of the whole world. "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John ii. 2).

In page 58 of "The Defence" we find the following passage:—"Is the doctrine to be established, that all, in the congregations of Christians, as they are at present, are to be accounted as sinners, who are to be addressed as having 'put off their sins' by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but have not 'put on Christ,' and need not the clothing of his Spirit? If this be the real state of the Christian church at present, how much, alas! does it differ from that state in which it stood, when those who professed the religion of Christ in the early church could be addressed as 'saints,' who 'in every thing' were 'enriched by Christ, in all utterance, and in all knowledge.' Surely, it could never be

intended, that in any age men should so far leave the true foundation, as with mutual consent to adopt a standard so low as this, and to strive to consecrate it by their faith and practice."

In this extremely obscure and involved passage, it would appear, so far as I am able to collect Dr. Hancock's meaning, that he objects to congregations being addressed as "sinners:" but it is clearly correct to do so, unless we acknowledge some as absolutely perfect: and that none are so, is evident; for the Apostle John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and *the truth is not in us*" (1 John i. 8). We must, then, *all* be sinners in the sight of God. Therefore it is that Scripture speaks of fallen man as "accepted in the Beloved." Thus may *believers* be called "*saints*" in Christ Jesus. And it may be said, further, in reply, that *none* but those who have "put off their sins" by faith in Christ, have "put on Christ," and are clothed with his Spirit.

The following extract from the "Principles of Religion," by Henry Tuke, is added, because it not only expresses clearly his own views on the point of justification, but it may fairly be supposed to express also the opinions of an influential portion of the body, since his work was published under the sanction of the "Morning Meeting*." The edition before me, printed in 1827, is the ninth, which shews how widely the work has been circulated.

* The "Morning Meeting" is a sort of Divinity Committee; and in the exercise of its functions it would render solid service to the cause of truth if it would take under review the Works of Barclay, Penn, Tuke, and others, and set forth their accordance, or non-accordance, with the word of God.

P. 57 : "By this view of the doctrine of justification, we conceive the apparently different sentiments of the Apostles Paul and James are reconciled. Neither of them say, that faith alone, or works alone, are the cause of our being justified ; but as one of them asserts the necessity of faith, and the other of works, for effecting this great object, a clear and convincing proof is afforded that *both contribute to our justification* ; and that faith without works, and works without faith, are equally dead."

I have already candidly expressed my fears, that the views unfolded in this extract continue to be held by many Friends ; but I rejoice in the belief that there is a large, and rapidly increasing, number, who entertain totally different opinions on this fundamental point. It is refreshing to turn from such a cold and depressing theory, to the humbling yet animating view presented to us in the Scriptures, and which is clearly and beautifully expressed by an eminent author of our own community * :—

"Man by nature is the child of wrath, labouring under the curse of the law—the awful sentence of eternal death. What then can be conceived more adapted to his need, than *justification*—a plenary remission of all his sins through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and a free acceptance of him as righteous for the sake of a righteous Saviour? Here he finds reconciliation with a God of justice, deliverance from condemnation and eternal punishment, and a well-founded hope of immortal bliss. The utmost claims

* "Hints on the portable Evidence of Christianity, by Joseph John Gurney," p. 138.

of the law are satisfied; the holiness of the Creator is more than ever manifested; and the broken-hearted sinner reposes in peace on the bosom of infinite mercy. In himself, indeed, as a transgressor from his birth, he is vile and polluted, but, by the blood of Jesus sprinkled on his heart, his conscience is purged from every dead work; and having obtained an interest in the Saviour of men, he wears a robe of righteousness in which there is no spot. God accepts him in the Beloved; and adopts him as a child of grace, and as an heir of glory."

May it not be safely asserted, that the erroneous views on justification which we have been considering, originate in part in a low and inadequate conception of the law of God? Did we sufficiently contemplate its perfect holiness, we should see that no human being ever does fulfil its authoritative requirements. "Whosoever offends in one point, he is guilty of all:" none, therefore, but a sinless being, can ever obtain eternal life on the ground of *obedience*. To speak, then, of being justified by works, is to speak ignorantly of the perfect holiness of God and his law. "Eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is a *free gift*, not a *payment*. It is only through Jesus Christ, through faith in his atoning blood, that we can attain the eternal possession, purchased for us thereby. Where, then, is our merit? Why simply that of being "unprofitable servants"—of having only done that which it was our duty to do; "for if every duty were performed, there could be no *merit*—merit never begins till duty is surpassed *."

* See "An Appeal to Scripture, on the Doctrine of Jus-

Now to take one example. God says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mark xii. 30). Is there any man who can so far deceive himself as to believe that he does at all times love God *supremely*? If not, if our own heart do not acquit us, "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (1 John iii. 20)—He seeth us as we really are. What unregenerate man, thus contemplating the perfect holiness of the law of God, can say, "Oh, how love I thy law!" (Ps. cxix. 97.) Can he love that law by which his conscience tells him he stands a condemned criminal in the sight of God? Can he look with complacency on his own death-warrant? Never will he be able to comprehend the perfect holiness, as well as entire fitness, of this law, until he is awakened and enlightened by the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit: nor, until this take place, will he be able to appreciate the inexpressible, illimitable love of God; or be enabled to exclaim, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10)—loved us when we were dead in trespasses and sins; when not only aliens, but even in open rebellion against him and his law; for, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke xix. 14) is the secret language of the heart of fallen man. But when, under the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, man is brought to see

tification, and on the Duty of Studying the Bible, by a Member of the Society of Friends." (Hamilton, Adams, and Co.; and E. Fry.) An excellent and Scriptural Tract.

his lost condition—the bent and tendency of his own heart, and the depth of its depravity ; to see also the perfect holiness and perfect equity of God's law, and his own utter inability to fulfil it ;—it is then that he will rejoice to find unfolded in the blessed Gospel the glad tidings of a way of reconciliation, by which “ God may be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus ” (Rom. iii. 26) ; “ who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness ” (1 Pet. ii. 24) ;—to learn that “ He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed ” (Isa. liii. 5) ; that “ the Lord hath laid on Him ” (as upon the head of the scape-goat, Lev. xvi. 10) “ the iniquity of us all ; ” that “ He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him ” (2 Cor. v. 21)—in and through whom we can alone stand accepted in the Divine sight ; for he suffered for us, “ the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God ; ” he died that we might live, redeemed from the “ *dominion* ” of sin—not “ in sin that grace may abound, God forbid ! ” for “ how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein ? ” but that, “ being justified by faith, we might have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ ” (Rom. v. 1).

In searching into Ecclesiastical History, do we not find that every successful attempt to evade the doctrine of Justification by Faith in the Atonement, has been mainly supported by the introduction of some rule for the conscience, rather than the pure

words of the Spirit of God? The Roman Catholics depend upon the traditions of the church, whereby alms-giving and voluntary humiliations are declared to be meritorious, and the necessity for purity of heart is overlooked. Notwithstanding the doctrinal soundness of the Church of England on all essential points, the celebrated controversy on "*Baptismal Regeneration*" shews the construction put upon her formularies by no inconsiderable portion of her clergy, who appear to consider themselves as exclusively entitled to the character of "orthodox." The Socinians presume to legislate for God, and satisfy themselves that it perfectly accords with his merciful nature to accept of sincere intentions and benevolence of action, as the befitting homage from creatures to their gracious Creator; and too many Friends with wonderful adroitness profess to honour the Spirit, whilst they evade his laws. The doctrine of acceptance by obedience to inward light, hardens the heart against repentance; and men thoroughly instructed in this school, how much soever they may desire to be spiritually-minded, go on in a course of alternate gloom and self-complacency: they seek to be *preserved*, rather than try themselves whether they have been *converted*, so as that Christ dwells in their hearts by faith.

The objection usually urged against that great doctrine of the Reformation, "Justification by Faith" in our Lord Jesus Christ, is, that it has a tendency to lessen the obligations to personal holiness. But do not our actions spring from principles? Let us, then, examine which will be the most operative in the regulation of these principles,

love or fear—"perfect love, which casteth out fear," or "fear, which hath torment*." Men obey human laws from the fear of the penalties consequent upon *detected* infraction. But will this principle reach to the *heart*? How, then, is fear to be an influential principle in the regulation of the "thoughts and intents of the heart?"

Fear is not an universally constraining principle: on the other hand, *love* is the most powerful, the most constraining, the most operative principle of our nature. The very constitution of the human mind answers in favour of *love*; and we may, perhaps, safely reason *upwards*, from the operation of this principle in our earthly relations, to its effects in reference to the eternal relations between the soul and God. What parent ever retained the affections of his child by a system of *terror*? It may have enforced a reluctant *outward* obedience, but did it operate beyond the presence of the parent? did it secure at all times, and under all circumstances, a cheerful, a heartfelt obedience? But love is an ever-constraining principle. Can I wound even the feelings of that parent, whose love for me is so deep, that no sacrifice is too great for it to make; so strong, that no labour is too heavy for it to sustain; and so tender, that no office of affection is too minute for it to observe?

If love, then, be an ever-present, an ever-constraining influence, in reference to the earthly parent,

* 1 John iv. 18, 19: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him because he first loved us."

what must it be, what is it, in the heart of the believer in Jesus, towards Him who has done and suffered so much for us? *Who*, and *for whom*? *Who*?—the Son of God, who left the bosom of his Father; the peace, the happiness, the glory of Heaven; to come down to this “sin-spoilt world,” and take upon him our nature; to be made in the likeness of man; to lead a life of suffering; to die a cruel, an agonizing death!—to bear not only this, but the penalty of our sins “in his own body on the tree.” And *for whom*? Was it for those who loved him? No, but for fallen, sinful creatures—for condemned criminals—for convicted rebels. Here is, indeed, love: “not that we loved God, but that,” “*while we were yet sinners*, Christ died for us*” (Rom. v. 8).

Now, search all the deep treasures of the philosophy of the human mind for any equally operative principle with this: search all the hidden mysteries of every other system, whether of natural religion, or of the mystical spiritualizings of things *too simple* for the proud heart of man: search for, and bring forth, any other principle, which shall thus tenderly and forcefully constrain to the love of God, and to

* “The reception of the Divine mercy is accompanied with a willing subjection to the Divine authority. The Gospel and the Law go hand in hand. When the convictions of the Law have induced the acceptance of the Gospel, the grace of the Gospel endears the precepts of the Law; which are then regarded not merely as the commands of authority, but as the requirements of love—the intimations of the will of the God of mercy. As the reign of Christ extends, the law of love prevails—of love to God and love to man;—and righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are the blessed results.”—(Wardlaw.)

consequent desires to be made more and more conformable to His holy law by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, and to become more and more conformed to its perfect requirings in the inward man. Here is the true ground of self-abasement and of heart-humility. Here shall we see, in the clear light of the law of God—not only that our deeds, our works, our ways, but—that our thoughts, our best desires, our very prayers, need the continual application of the atoning “blood of sprinkling.” We shall see, in this light, that there is not any *single* action of our lives so perfect in its motive and object, so exclusively moved by supreme love to God, so pure from all defilement of pride, ambition, or self-love, as that we would, at the bar of God, hazard our eternal state upon the verdict it should bring upon us. If this, then, be a true position, where are we to go with our fallen nature, with the whole mass of our sins of omission and commission? To whom, indeed, can we go, but to Jesus—to Him who emphatically hath the *words of eternal life*?—to that Saviour, who stands more ready to receive us than we are to fly to him; who is not only ready to receive, but who, in wonderful love and condescending mercy, comes forth and runs to meet us? To what, then, can the awakened sinner come, but to that which alone suits his case, and is the only fitting remedy,—to a simple, humble, confiding reception of, and dependence upon, the offers of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus our Lord—to the saving belief that he is “justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus?” (Rom. iii. 24.)

The truly converted man, though deeply sensible of his manifold infirmities—of his utter unworthiness—is yet enabled, with feelings of confiding thankfulness, to declare, “I know in whom I have believed....I know that *my* Redeemer liveth.” He is in possession of that “joy and peace in believing,” which is the Christian’s privilege and comfort. “For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition,” &c. (Eph. ii. 14). How painful is the contrast, between this state of humble confidence, and that of the awakened soul whose way is hedged in by a mystical system which practically sets aside the necessity of repentance, faith, and conversion, substituting in their stead the notion of an “inward principle,” which is stated to be possessed by every child of Adam born into the world, and is not only “universal,” but “renovating,” “atoning,” and “sanctifying,” and, if abode under and obeyed, “saving” also! Instead of being exhorted to “repent and believe the Gospel,” he is directed, in the stillness of all flesh, to centre down to this “inward principle” of “Saving Light.” If, unhappily, he follow this unscriptural advice, will he not be in danger of settling down with some undefined and dreamy expectation, that what he has been taught to wait for in a passive state of mental prostration, will, some day or other, be gradually developed with vivifying power, and every thought he brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ? Will he not be thus in danger of substituting the fancied workings of an inward principle, for salvation by Christ—the following of its supposed pointings, for justi-

fication by faith—and the purification stated to be consequent upon obedience to it, for sanctification by the Holy Ghost ?

There are three distinct classes of persons who are especially in danger from the operation of these unscriptural views,—the desponding, the self-complacent, and the careless.

Persons of the first class, when awakened to some sense of sin, will find that this “ saving light ” affords no redemption from its present power, no evidence of forgiveness of past offences. Having their eyes bent upon their own corruption, instead of looking in faith unto Him “ who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification ” (Rom. iv. 25), they must go on their way mourning, doubting, and comfortless.

Those of the second class, who are in some degree so awakened, yet, without discerning the exceeding sinfulness of sin, often experience a feeling of self-satisfying complacency in an outwardly consistent course, and are in imminent peril of making “ obedience ” their saviour—of laying the foundation of their hopes more on the sincerity of their endeavours to dwell near the “ principle,” than on the Lord Jesus Christ ; by faith in whom we can alone be saved ; by which faith the Christian overcomes the world, and without which it is impossible to please God.

We can conceive of a third class, whose make of mind may contribute to the same result, though by a different course. Even the careless may at times feel themselves to be sinners, and may address themselves to the work they have been directed to engage in ; but they will soon find it hopeless in its character

and profitless in its effects. They will find that the light to which they have been directed, neither gives a sense of pardon for sin, nor power to resist it; and, concluding from what they have heard, that transgression against the Divine will consists as well in the imaginings as in the deeds of evil, such persons, when they experience the utter hopelessness of purifying the first springs of action, will be in awful danger of falling into a state of reckless indifference to religion, restrained only by outward appearances; having a name to live, but "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12).

Now, according to the teachings of Christ and his Apostles, we learn that the man who is awakened by the Holy Spirit to a sense of his lost condition as a sinner, and enabled by His renewed influences to fathom, in some measure, the depth of the depravity of his corrupt nature, will be brought to acknowledge that the work of spiritual renovation is that which "the power of God unto salvation" can alone accomplish: how thankfully then will he listen to the Gospel message of reconciliation*, and how joyfully will he accept the offers of the mercy of God by faith in the atoning "blood of Jesus;" whereby he may have "boldness to enter into the holiest, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;" and may draw nigh in "full assurance of faith, having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water" (Heb. x. 19—22). Being reconciled to God by the death of his Son, he

* See Eph. ii. 16; Col. i. 21, 22; 2 Cor. v. 18—21; Heb. ii. 17.

can call God his Father, Christ his Saviour, and the Holy Ghost his Sanctifier and Comforter. He will have "good hope through grace," and be sustained thereby in the path of life, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment.

And here may I be allowed to offer, in sincere humility, and with a feeling of entire unworthiness, a few words of tender counsel and earnest exhortation to my dear Friends, especially to my younger Friends—to the young men of our Society—not to suffer any worldly consideration, or spiritual discouragement of whatever character, whether from within or from without, to lead them to "forsake the assembling of themselves together;" and this not only on that emphatically called, "The Lord's-day," but on other days of the week when public worship is kept up. Let me affectionately entreat you to be instant in this obvious duty of meeting together for the worship of Almighty God; and if you are often sensible, that, instead of your making it a season of prayer, you are converting your Father's house into a house of merchandise, may not the reason be, that you have entered upon the duty without asking the Divine blessing upon it?

Let me entreat you to persevere in this reasonable service, even though you may be destitute of the ministry of the word. Pray against that state of listless expectancy, which is as opposed to the spirit of prayer as is the commerce of worldly thoughts; and ever remember, that where two or three of Christ's flock are met together in His name, there is He in the midst of them.

We can never too strongly insist on the inestimable privilege of a living way of access to the Throne of Grace being opened unto us by the blood of Jesus, in whose name we may have boldness to approach our Heavenly Father ; or on the encouraging truth, that a sense of want, a consciousness of inability to ask, is of itself the sanction and qualification for prayer, since these feelings are evidences of the influences of the Holy Spirit.

How can that soul want objects and motives, which " has every thing to ask, and nothing to render ? * " We are directed to ask, and promised that we shall receive ; we are bid to knock, and promised that it shall be opened ; we are told to seek, and promised that we shall find. The promises are to those who not only wait, but who ask, and knock, and seek. In the humbling sense of helplessness—of want of every thing—of being really spiritually " wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," lay yourselves in true prostration of soul at the footstool of the Throne of Grace, where " we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin " (Heb. iv. 15). Holy Scripture furnishes us with varied forms of petition : " What must I do to be saved ? " " God be merciful to me a sinner ; " " O send out thy light and thy truth : let them lead me ; " " That which I see not, teach thou me ; " " Lord, save me ; I perish ; "—and hath not He who is truth itself said, " Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast

* " Defence," p. 30.

out ? " (John vi. 37.) Where, then, is room for doubting, where for despair ? But the devil's device is to keep us from a Throne of Grace. Those who would be horror-struck at " denying the Lord that bought them," or those who are too timid to believe and appropriate the blessed promises of God, the enemy tempts, by insinuating that *they* are not *prepared* to come before the living God. " Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ? " (Micah vi. 6). True, who hath any offering to bring to God ? but the Holy Spirit is promised to help our infirmities, and Christ hath said, " Him that cometh to me, I will *in no wise* cast out."

" Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream ;
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."

Answer the tempter, the discourager, with the words of Jesus, and with his precious offers : " Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely " (Rev. xxii. 17). Do you feel that you have evil hearts of unbelief (the foundation of all sin) ? The Bible gives you a supplication : " Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief " (Mark ix. 24). " Thou hast said that thou wilt grant thy Holy Spirit to them that ask his influence of thee. I plead thine own immutable truth, thy promise : ' If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? ' " (Luke xi. 13.) And though it may be the will of God long to delay the

answer to our prayers, where is the praying soul that was ever eventually denied ?

There are those who can testify, that, in seasons of the deepest discouragement, of the most entire absence of all good, humble supplication has been mercifully answered, and the "house of prayer" has been cleared of the thieves who would rob us of our peace, by keeping us from the footstool of Divine grace and mercy.

And what is prayer ? Let the author of some of the most beautiful poetry of which our language can boast, give his simple, touching, and evangelical answer.

" Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear ;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try :
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

O Thou by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod :
Lord, teach us how to pray."

The exhaustless treasury of Divine truth furnishes an answer to every kind of doubt—to every modification of fear—to every suggestion of despair. Does a soul say, "Behold, I am vile ; how shall I then present myself before the throne of God's holiness ?" the Bible gives him a suitable petition : "Create in me a clean heart, O God !" "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity"—yes ; but "God hath made

Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Art thou ready to despair? Thou canst not be in more desperate circumstances than the thief on the cross. Was not his believing prayer, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," answered? And how? "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (!)

"Nothing in my hands I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

"The error of the early Fathers upon the subject of prayer, consisted in their ascription of far too much to man, and far too little to God, in its acceptable service. This appears in a two-fold character. In the first place, they tax the innate powers of man too heavily: they call upon him to *repress sin in his own heart, and then to appear before God*; whereas, the *Scripture* every where exhorts us to *ask of God to create a clean heart within us*, because it is a blessing which He only can impart. But so possessed are they, with this power in man to deal independently with God in the matter of sin, that, in treating upon forgiveness, they become oblivious of the doctrine of the atonement *."—"We deny that there is any power in man, either to purify his own heart, or to offer to God by his own unassisted effort, the prayer which He will hear and answer.

* "Doctrinal Errors," p. 125.

For these, he must be altogether indebted to that Holy Ghost who is also termed in Scripture 'the Spirit of supplication ;' and of whom it is declared, that He 'helpeth the infirmities' of the believer in prayer, 'Himself making intercession for him *.' "

These passages are very important, as they express in a clear manner an erroneous view of the doctrine of prayer, which has kept but too many from the Throne of Grace. It is, in fact, the devil's grand device, to induce the poor sinner to believe that it is presumption to go before God in prayer, until he has in some measure purified his own heart. Now, as this can only be effected by the power of God, so long as his great enemy can thus keep him from prayer he is but too secure of his prey ; while, on the other hand, it has been most expressively said, that—

“—— Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.”

A desire to receive—a sense of the need of spiritual blessings—is the preparation of the Spirit for the offering of acceptable prayer. Whatsoever is commanded or promised in the Bible, may be asked for, with confidence that such petitions are according to the will of God. Men may at all times, and under any circumstances, come boldly, as needy suppliants, to the Throne of Grace, in the name of Jesus, the ever-living High Priest. To refrain from prayer, is to despise the commands and the promises of the Most High.

And here, if I may do so without violating the

* “Doctrinal Errors,” pp. 120, 121.

sacredness of the memory of one who will be ever held in most tender recollection by his children, I would venture to introduce his earnest exhortation on this subject, given in writing to each of them, upon an occasion when of all others it was likely to make the deepest impression. He thus writes:—
 “There is, however, one of the duties, and at the same time one of the highest privileges, of this glorious Gospel dispensation, to which I would call your most serious attention—the duty and the privilege of prayer.

“You need not to be told that prayer is not dependent upon words, or, that the mere repetition of words, unaccompanied by the incense of the heart, is not prayer; but that

‘Prayer is the breathing of a sigh,’ &c.

Still, independent as the performance of this duty is of form or system—of time or place—yet, to beings composed of matter as well as spirit, some degree of attention to these, though not indispensable, is at least helpful; and I would strongly recommend the morning, before you leave your chambers, and the evening, before you commit yourselves to sleep, as seasons peculiarly appropriate for this exercise. I have found the mere attitude of the body, to be no mean help to a preparation for that state of mind in which alone we can acceptably pray; and I will venture to add, for your encouragement, though under feelings of great self-abasement, and a deep sense of my own unworthiness, that some of the sweetest moments of my life have been spent upon my knees.”

In the progress of this little work, I have been deeply impressed with the extreme importance of an individual examination of the grounds on which we receive and hold opinions on matters of the highest interest ; and of cultivating the habit of a continual reference to the Bible, which alone is the safe, as well as the ultimate, standard of religious truth.

Every serious mind acknowledges the infinitely superior importance of the affairs of the soul and of eternity, to those of time and sense. Shall we, then, receive our religious belief as an unexamined heirloom ? Shall we lay aside the charter of our spiritual liberty, satisfied with the knowledge of its name and character only, and, if we may so speak, knowing little beyond its preamble ? Shall we rest satisfied, without anxiously inquiring into and ascertaining our individual right to its immunities and its privileges ? Surely, with the simple admission of the immortality of the soul, common sense compels the anxious inquiry after the means of obtaining an immortality of bliss—the scriptural inquiry, “ What must I do to be saved ? ”

Allow me, then, to entreat you, my fellow-members, to apply to the subject of religion that liberal spirit of free and untrammelled inquiry, which you so successfully employ on subjects of infinitely less moment ; feeling assured, as I do, that a prayerful study of the word of God will build you up in that faith once delivered to the saints, and direct you to lay hold on that hope of eternal life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The cause is not ours ; in humble dependence upon the Divine Blessing I address this little tract

to the calm and candid consideration of my fellow-members in religious profession ; and, in the words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, " I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified " (Acts xx. 32) ; and may He " grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

" Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph. iii. 16—21.)

APPENDIX.

CONTENTS.

- A. "Extracts" from a Letter to the Author.
- B. "Notes on Mysticism;" by John Eliot Howard.
- C. "Strictures on Barclay;" by the late John Eliot: with a notice of the Philosophical Romance of "Hai Ebn Yokdan."
- D. Extracts from "Errors regarding Religion;" by James Douglas, Esq.
- E. Extracts from "Doctrinal Errors of the Apostolical and early Fathers;" by William Osburn, junior.

A P P E N D I X.

INTRODUCTION.

THE "Extract" (A) is from a letter which was addressed to the Author by a highly valued Friend and deeply experienced Christian, who kindly allows this use to be made of it. It contains striking observations on some passages in Barclay and Penn, illustrative of their views on the great point of "Justification."

The "Notés on Mysticism" (B), by my Friend John Eliot Howard, will be found deeply interesting, to those who wish thoroughly to investigate the subjects to which they refer : they deserve an attentive perusal.

The Extracts from the late John Eliot's "Strictures on some Passages in Barclay" (C), afford strong presumptive proof that Barclay adopted Keith's visionary system, and that we are indebted, through those writers, to the Platonic Philosophy, and not to the New Testament, for the doctrine of "a Universal and Saving Light," as "something" distinct from the Holy Spirit ; as well as for a peculiar and questionable mode of stating the scriptural doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Extracts (D and E) which conclude the Appendix are from two works which at the present juncture are peculiarly valuable, because, without referring to our Society, and evidently without any

view to its present position, they each strikingly illustrate the evils resulting to the Christian church whenever it departs from the paramount authority of Holy Scripture, or uses unscriptural terms in treating on religious subjects ; and also the pernicious consequences of every attempt to graft Christianity on Philosophy, and to be wise above that which is written, by endeavouring to explain the hidden counsels and purposes of God by the unsanctified efforts of the dark and narrow conceptions of the human mind. And it is well worthy of remark, that those who have most earnestly protested against the application of human learning to Divine subjects, have been insensibly led, by the writings of imaginative and philosophical men, to adopt certain views apparently inconsistent with revealed truth, and to explain and support them less on the authority of Holy Scripture than on that of the Heathen Philosophers and the ancient Fathers ; many of whom, in embracing Christianity, could not relinquish their predilection for their own darling systems, or refrain from attempting to harmonize them with the simple and sublime truths of the Gospel.

A.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

MY DEAR FRIEND,— * * * * The reasoning contained in the book to which I alluded—namely, “The Doctrine of the Catholic Church respecting the blessed Eucharist, by the Rev. Henry Rutter”—is most ingenious; and it appears to me evident that nothing can fairly controvert it but the blessed doctrine of Justification by Faith. Luther was most certainly directed by the Holy Spirit to lay hold of that one only weapon that could reach and give a deadly stroke to the root of Popery. But I will proceed to give thee the passage which I mentioned to thee as having its exact counterpart in Barclay’s Apology.—

“As the body of Christ is here in its glorified state, it is perfect and entire under each species; consequently, under that of bread is contained the blood in the body, and under that of wine the sacred body is produced together with the blood. With Christ’s body and blood there must also be his soul; and, by a necessary connexion, the Second Person in the adorable Trinity hypostatically united to his humanity; also, by accompaniment, the other two Divine Persons, as they have but one individual nature, and are one and the same God. So that here are present, Christ, true God and true man; and the whole blessed Trinity, who by His immensity fills the whole creation, but in a particular manner is present with the sacred humanity of Christ.” p. 28.

I will now just mention what in Barclay appeared to me a parallel to this gratuitous assumption.—

Prop. v. & vi. §§. 13, 14: “By this seed, grace, and word of God we understand a spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells and this some call *Vehiculum Dei*, or the *spiritual body of Christ*, the *flesh and blood of Christ*, which came down from heaven, of which all the saints do feed, and are thereby nourished unto eternal life.....Wherever it is, God and

Christ are as wrapped up therein a real spiritual substance *,” &c.

The Roman Catholic “host” differs from this “principle” of Barclay, in being received consciously by the person who swallows it; whereas the “*Vehiculum Dei*,” “seed,” or “principle,” is implanted at the time of the birth of every individual. There appears to me, therefore, to be more semblance of agreement with Scripture in the Catholic’s notion, than in Barclay’s, because the latter excludes faith entirely, since the introduction of the “Seed” takes place without the consciousness of the individual receiving it; but it seems, after it has been within him for an indefinite time, he may feel it. The Catholic would consider faith necessary for the worthy reception of the “host.”

William Penn, in his “Christian Quaker” (chap. 17), says : —“And as at any time disobedient men have hearkened to the still voice of the Word that very same principle and word of life in man, has *mediated* and *atoned*, and God has been propitious †,” &c.

It is difficult to conceive what bad consequences may not result from such a complication of deadly error, by which the very spirit and essence of the Gospel is destroyed.

All this ill-working machinery is evidently the contrivance of the wisdom of man, to do away with Justification by Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Catholic prepares a wafer : Barclay fancies a seed, whereof the Scripture knows nothing at all. But *seed* is spoken of in Scripture; and as “the primary rule of faith and life is the sensible influences of the Holy Spirit” (see Evans’s Exposition, Preface, p. 11)—and the Scripture is only the secondary rule—by the authority of the primary, the secondary may be rendered conveniently pliable; and therefore Seed, although it be as clear as day that it means, when applied to our blessed Saviour as the “seed of the woman,” the *Offspring*; and, when represented as being scattered by the sower, it means the “word of God,” the *Gospel*; yet, as neither of these meanings would at all answer the purpose of supporting the theory of “Universal and Saving Light,” it must

* For the whole of these passages, see pp. 34, 35.

† This most curious account of the all-efficiency of the “Seed,” or “Principle,” is given more at length in p. 36.

be made to mean the "Vehiculum Dei," or the "Inward Light," "the Principle," &c. &c., so as to render it unnecessary for mankind to know any thing of the Man Christ Jesus; whereas, alas! if we eat not the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink not His blood, we have no life in us: in other words, if we do not look to the Lord Jesus as having subjected himself to death for our sakes, that we, instead of the death we deserve, might have life, the Scripture gives us no warrant whatever to hope that we shall have it. For this is *the way* which God hath appointed to warm our cold hearts, when by his Holy Spirit he quickens us to a sense of our sinful and lost state; then, to be made sensible that we have reconciliation with God by the death of His beloved Son, who gave himself for us, actually receiving in our stead the very shaft of death that must otherwise have pierced and rankled in our hearts eternally, may well move us to the love of God.

But why should the idea of our bringing a seed, an inward light, or an inward principle, into the world with us, or having it implanted in us as soon as we are born, move us to love God more than we should be induced to love Him because he has furnished us with bodily organs, or with intellectual powers? "Well, but Christ died that we might have this inward principle bestowed upon us, which if we obey we shall be saved." Who told us so? And to such sophistry as this the mournful answer of the honest heart must be, "Alas! the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do—how am I to be *saved* by my obedience to an inward principle?" None, therefore, but the thorough-going Pharisee, can have satisfaction from this notion of obedience. But what will these do in the end? A Saviour is as much wanted to atone for our disobedience to the "seed" or "light," as for our breaking the law. If, therefore, the value of his precious blood is exhausted in purchasing this "light" for us, we are left as completely in death and darkness as if there were no such provision supposed; and if in answer to this it be said, as Penn would give us to understand, that by our repentance we may have the benefit of the renewed atonement of "the Principle," the same answer must be made as was given at the Reformation concerning the sacrifice of the Mass:—"Either the one sacrifice of the body of Christ, for sin was sufficient, or it was not: If it was sufficient, there

can be no occasion for any other; if it was not, no repetition of it, were it possible, can be sufficient." But to shew that such Quakerism is, in this respect, like Popery—a law of works, not of faith,—I have often thought the epitome, given by William Penn in the same tract from which I have already quoted (*The Christian Quaker*, chap. 14), is very conclusive: "The way to arrive at Evangelical righteousness, is first to perform the righteousness of the Law. By law I mean, not that of politic shadows and ceremonies, or the external order or policy of the Jews; but that moral and eternal law which is said to have come by Moses (though but repeated and renewed by him), and is accomplished by Christ. And there is great hopes, that they who conscientiously keep the beginning, will compass the end. Such as have conquered *evil doing*, if they be faithful to what they have received of God's Light and Spirit, it will enable them against *bad saying*, till at last they overcome *evil thinking* too; and witness that Scripture fulfilled, 'Judgment (the law) is brought forth unto victory (the Gospel),' " &c.

Now we see by this what the wisdom of man, with the highest and most plausible pretensions, would do for us: he would set the folding doors of heaven wide open, so that Turks, Jews, and Heathens may all go in without any difficulty, if they be but faithful to the light; but, behold! when it comes to the point, they have a certain preliminary to execute, which no mere man has ever yet performed, nor ever will perform to the end of the world. In vain, therefore, is the door set open, for not a mortal can get to the threshold. Well might the inspired Apostle say, that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God!" And how fearfully will the wise be taken in their own craftiness, if they imagine they can perform the righteousness of the Law, in any degree, before they come to Christ. No: "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember," &c. (*Eph. ii. 8—11.*) Would that we might all *know* and constantly *remember* our lost estate, and then we should most thankfully avail ourselves of that *amazing grace* whereof we have such infinite need!

B.

NOTES ON MYSTICISM ; BY JOHN ELIOT HOWARD.

MYSTICISM is a system of religion originating in the pride and wisdom of fallen human nature, and proceeding on the assumption that *without being born again* men are "partakers of the Divine nature *."

It is interesting to trace the first germ of this exotic plant, its subsequent introduction into the Christian enclosure, and the fruits which it has brought forth.

One important consequence of exposing the false spirituality of the mystic writers, will, it is hoped, be to increase our value for the Scripture doctrine of the Holy Spirit in all its fulness; and especially to raise in our estimation the blessing of that indwelling of the Comforter in the hearts of believers in Jesus, which is their exalted privilege, and the earnest of their future inheritance †.

The mind of man is so constituted as to need some religious system, and, when ignorant of Revelation, is prone to attempt to explain that which is connected with the unseen world. Formed with a soul designed for communion with its Creator, but now alienated from the chief good of his existence, he pants after that which is not yet possessed; is attracted by whatever is mysterious; though, at the same time, awed by the apprehension of unseen Power.

Hence, in an early age of the world, the contemplative portion of mankind in the wide regions of the East, had framed theories to explain the origin of evil, and other mysterious and incomprehensible subjects. They considered matter, in every form, the source of evil; and, consequently, imagined man's liability to sin to proceed from his connexion with a body of material structure. The soul, on the contrary, they regarded as a *portion of Divinity*

* 2 Peter i. 4.

† Eph. i. 14.

—a spark of eternal light, confined, as in a prison, in a body of flesh and sin. Man, therefore, whilst here below, was supposed to be compounded of two principles acting in direct opposition to each other : first, a terrestrial and corrupt or vitiated body ; secondly, a soul *partaking of the nature of the Deity*, and derived from the region of purity and light. Religion consisted in endeavouring, by means of contemplation and abstraction from the body, to disentangle the soul from the defilements of earth, and to return to the source of Deity whence it was derived*.

Thus at the present day the philosophy of the unchanging East teaches, “that every thing we can see, or form any conception of, is to be referred to one or other of two principles—it is either spirit or matter all spirit is God.....God exists without attributes, in a state of eternal repose, unconnected with any of the forms of matter ;—that the *spirit of man is individuated Deity*; that in its connexion with matter it is degraded and imprisoned ; and that the great and only business of man on earth, is to seek deliverance, and to return to the source whence it has been severed. The mode of doing this is by the practice of ceremonies connected with bodily austerities and torture †, which are said to leave spirit, even while in the body, in a state of Divine tranquillity resembling that of God, and to prepare it for reunion with Him. These speculations form the belief of all the Hindoos ‡.”

Plato, and his kindred band of philosophers among the Greeks, brought this system to perfection ; and if it had been permitted to mortal eye, unaided by Revelation, to scan the deep things of God, none ever promised better for the attempt §.

The following extracts, from a conversation supposed to take place between Socrates and his disciples on the day of his death,

* See Mosheim’s “ Commentaries ” (Introduction) for a full explanation of these views, Chap. i.

† One of the means adopted in order to leave the mind free from interruption, is to turn round until the bodily senses are in a state of suspension.

‡ “ Missionary Records ”—“ India.”

§ Some scanty rays of light from the Jewish Scriptures had, however, no doubt reached them. (See Dr. A. Clarke’s *Succession of Sacred Literature*, vol. i. p. 248 ; and Lardner’s *Works*, vol. iv. p. 205.)

will illustrate this point* :—“’Tis this (the body) that cramps our application to philosophy ; and the greatest of all our evils is, that when it has given us some respite, and we are set upon meditation, it steals in and interrupts our meditation all on a sudden. It cumpers, troubles, and surprises us in such a manner, that it hinders us from descrying the truth. Now we have made it out, that, in order to trace the purity and truth of any thing, we should lay aside the body, and only employ the soul to examine the objects we pursue. So that we can never arrive at the wisdom we court till after death. While we are in this life we can only approach to the truth *in proportion to our removing from the body*, and renouncing all correspondence with it that is not of mere necessity, and keeping ourselves clear from the contagion of its natural corruption, till God himself comes to deliver us. Then, indeed, being freed from all bodily folly, we shall converse, in all probability, with men that enjoy the same liberty, and shall *know within ourselves the pure essence of things ; which, perhaps, is nothing else but the truth.* But he who is not pure, is not allowed to approach to purity itself. Now the purgation of the soul, as we were saying but just now, *is only its separation from the body*—its accustoming itself to retire and lock itself up, renouncing all commerce with it as much as possible, and living by itself, whether in this or the other world, without being chained to the body.

“ When the soul pursues things by itself, without the aid of the body, it betakes itself to what is pure, immortal, immutable ; and as being of the same nature, dwells constantly upon it while it is master of itself. *Then its errors are at an end*, and it is always the same as being united to what never changes ; and this passion of the soul is what we call wisdom or prudence. It is pretty evident that those who instituted the purifications, called by us *teletes*—that is, perfect expiations—were persons of no contemptible rank, men of great genius, who in the first ages meant by such riddles to give us to know that whoever enters the other world without being initiated and purified, shall be hurled headlong into the vast abyss ; and that whoever arrives there after due purgation and expiation, shall be lodged in the apartment of the gods. If the soul depart in this condition,

* See Works of Plato, Eng. Trans. 1772, vol. ii. pp. 98, 102, 121, 124.

it repairs to a Being *like itself*—a Being that is Divine, immortal, and full of wisdom ; and as it is said, by those who have been initiated in the holy mysteries *, it truly passes a whole course of eternity with the gods."

The philosophers, such as Julian, Celsus, Porphyry, Apollonius of Tyana, &c.†, furnished the bitterest persecutors of the church, and the most formidable enemies to Christianity. They saw the necessity of refining the gross system of idolatry, and therefore maintained that "there is one Source of all-existence, the abstract of all perfection, from whose superabundance of life all the gods which are akin to him emanated, and in them the Divinity, which comprehends all things within itself, has unfolded itself, so that in every one of these divinities one individual Divine property or power, stands forth personified. In these divinities the multitude, who are unable to raise themselves by the force of contemplation, to the One Great Source of all, pray to these qualities. Only in relation to these can all worship, which is testified by objects of sense be explained ; that Source of all existence, on the contrary, who is far above all connexion with the visible world, cannot be honoured by any outward observance or sensible object ; but to Him *only the philosopher can raise himself, by pure and spiritual contemplation*. Thus speaks Apollonius, of Tyana, in his work on Sacrifices : 'To the first of gods, who is One, and separated from all others, we shew the most worthy honour, when we sacrifice nothing to him, when we light no altar to him, and consecrate nothing material to him, for he wants nothing, nothing even from beings superior to us.....and from the most excellent of Beings we must ask for good things by the most excellent of all we have, *that is, by the spirit, which needs no outward organ* ‡.' " Heathenism, when thus refined, is most difficult to uproot.

* These mysteries originated in Egypt. Candidates for admission were forced to undergo rigorous probationary expiations, tending to weaken the influence of the body, and free spirit from it as much as possible ; and, after being sworn to secrecy, were then initiated in the hidden knowledge of the priests. So severe was the probation, that some, it is said, lost their lives in the course of it.

† "Mosheim's Commentaries," vol. ii. pp. 84, 67 ; "Lardner's Works," vol. iv. p. 497.

‡ "Neander's Three First Centuries," vol. i. pp. 24, 25.

Celsus, under the influence of these views, declaimed against the Christians, contending that it is necessary to exclude and reject all notions connected with sense, "in order to *contemplate God with the eye of the spirit*." The change of heart wrought in those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, was quite incomprehensible to him. He says, "Now it is manifest to every one, that those to whom sin has become a kind of second nature, no one can change by punishment; *how far less then by mercy!* for wholly to change any man's nature is the most difficult of all things..... Those who invite us to other religions proclaim, 'Let him draw near, who is pure from all stains, who is conscious of no evil, and who lives in holiness and righteousness:' but hear what the invitation of the Christians is: 'Whosoever is a sinner, whosoever is weak or deficient, in a word, every one that is a wretch, him will the kingdom of God receive!' What! then was not Christ sent also for those who are pure from sin? He reproaches the Christians with a blind belief; that....they have *redemption* for ever in their mouth: 'Believe, and you shall become blessed.*' "

When genuine mysticism has possession of the mind, it seems peculiarly to close every avenue against the reception of the simplicity of the Gospel, since

1. The belief in a Saviour come *in the flesh*, the doctrine of atonement for sin through *His blood*, and the resurrection *of the body*, are peculiarly foolishness in the sight of this wisdom, which regards *matter* as the origin of evil, and seclusion and abstraction *from matter* as rendering the soul fit for re-union with its Parent Deity without any mediator.

2. Reference to any outward revelation, or means of instruction, is superseded by a supposed knowledge of God obtained by the annihilation of thought and abstract meditation.

3. Prayer, according to the mystic, consists in allowing the soul to obey its native tendency towards the Fountain of Spirit, whence it emanated.

The early heresies of the Christian Church were deeply imbued with the spirit of mysticism. "They were generally con-

* Ibid. pp. 169—172. The inspired caution, "Beware lest any man spoil you with philosophy and vain deceit," &c., was indeed much needed.

sidered a mixture of Platonism, or Oriental philosophic heathenism, with some Christian truths." Those who held them agreed in denying the resurrection of the dead; and, considering themselves superior in knowledge to other Christians (as the term Gnostic implies), refused to submit to the authority of Scripture, and derived many gross and perverted views from the "philosophy and vain deceit" of the East. They regarded man as possessed of two souls—the one brutal, endowed merely with a perceptive libidinous faculty; the other rational, and gifted with wisdom and intelligence—the latter Divine in its origin; the former earthly, and derived from the soul of matter*."

Tatian, in like manner, tells us, "That our first parents were created with two spirits, or souls; the one material, the other immaterial, and *emanating from God*. All their offspring are also similarly created; they have an earthly and an heavenly spirit. But when Adam and Eve sinned, the latter quitted the former, because it refused to obey its suggestions, and returned to heaven. In this situation also are all their descendants; they have a material soul within them, and an immaterial soul, or in Platonic language, a demon, in heaven. The material soul, however, has a *spark of the Divine nature still in it*; and is able, by the exercise of its free will, to exalt itself above the earthly taint it had contracted, so as to be fitted for *receiving the suggestions of its immaterial counterpart, without which it can never attain the knowledge of heavenly things*†."

The Jewish sect of the Essenes arose out of an endeavour to reconcile the principles of Judaism with the Oriental Philosophy. They withdrew into solitude, and made it a point to keep the body low, by allowing themselves nothing but a bare subsistence; and as far as possible to disengage the soul from it by contemplation, that the immortal spirit might be prepared to re-ascend to those celestial regions whence it originally sprang. Their grand object was, by the mortification and maceration of the body to afford to the soul a greater facility in obeying the attraction upwards, by which it was always influenced. There was a considerable mixture of heathenism in their rites. They would not sacrifice at Jerusalem; and prided themselves so much on

* See Lardner's "History of Heretics."

† Osburn's "Doctrinal Errors," p. 322.

their superior sanctity, that they were obliged to undergo a purification, if they came in contact with one, even of their own sect, less holy than themselves*.

Philo Judæus was the most celebrated expositor of the views of this sect; and Mosheim says: "Wonderful is it to contemplate the influence and authority which this Alexandrian Jew had at one time acquired among the Christians. We may even go the length of saying, that, without Philo, the writings of those whom we term the Fathers, would, in many respects, be frequently altogether unintelligible.

"The tenets of this very celebrated Jew, respecting the soul, were in fact a compound or medley of the Egyptian, Platonic, and Mosaic principles. In the first place, he lays it down that in man there are two souls—the one rational, and *generated of the Word*; the other sensitive. The former, or rational mind, he regards as *a portion of the Deity*—that is, according to the Egyptians, a part of the most refined and supreme æther, and that, conformably to the Mosaic account, this had been imparted to man by the breath of God; in which it is to be remarked that he differs from Plato. The latter, or sensitive soul, he considers as impelled or animated by the Divine mind. Proceeding on principles like these, he inculcates a doctrine altogether similar to that taught by the mystics—namely, *that the celestial and rational soul should erect itself above every object of the senses*; that it should seek, *by means of contemplation, to separate itself from the body*; that, mindful of its Divine origin, it should be constantly aspiring to communion with its parent; and that it should endeavour by every possible means to undermine and weaken the power and influence of the body, and of the senses. To a soul once exalted above empty and corporeal things he holds forth a promise of Divine illumination, and pleasure incredible;" a kind of "sober intoxication.... This high measure of felicity is crowned by a conjunction with the parent Deity of all things..... He divides souls into two classes, the 'confessing' and the 'labouring.' The 'confessing' souls

* Note the displeasure with which Jehovah speaks of such as say, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. *These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day*" (Isai. lxi. 5).

are those which, being freed from all contagion of the body, as well as divested of all cogitation and emotion, and exalted above every object of the senses, have given themselves up entirely to God, and maintain themselves in the most perfect state of quietism.....The rational soul he maintains to be a portion of the Deity; *and that it is therefore by the innate, or rather implanted, power of God in her*, that she is enabled to cast off the bonds of flesh and the sensitive soul, and compose herself to a state of the most perfect quietism.....The 'labouring' souls are those which endeavour, by a constant exercise of thought, reflection, and judgment, to arrive at virtue, and strive to counteract all vicious propensities and perturbations, by means of reading, meditation, and prayer." But to a man desirous of attaining to a state of virtue, he appears to enjoin, "not only to mortify the senses, but also to forego the use of his tongue and voice *."

Philo gives his own experience in his youth thus: "I often left relations, friends, and country, and retired into the desert, that I might raise myself to worthy contemplations, but in this I did not succeed; and, on the contrary, my spirit either became distracted, or it was wounded by some impure impression. At times, however, in the midst of thousands, I find myself alone, while God represses the tumult of the soul, and teaches me, that it is not the difference of place which creates evil or good, but that it depends on God, who leads the ship of the soul whither he will †."

"The principles and maxims, then, of which we have been speaking, having, in the course of this (the second) century, insinuated themselves into the minds of the Egyptian Christians, and their teachers and instructors beginning also to acquire a strong relish for the writings of Philo, there sprang up suddenly a *twofold species of piety and virtue*—the one popular and public, the other mysterious and secret; as also a twofold order of Christians—the one consisting of 'Operants,' the other of 'Quiescents.' Of each of these species of discipline very obvious traces are to be discovered in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, and Justin Martyr. An accusation was, not many years back, preferred against Justin Martyr, and other Christian teach-

* Mosheim's "Commentaries," vol. ii. pp. 175—178.

† Neander's "Three First Centuries," p. 52.

ers of this and the succeeding century, on the ground of their having been guilty of a most base and ridiculous sophism, in maintaining that Christ, or the Word, was in all the Grecian philosophers, and more especially in Socrates; and that through this Christ, or interior Word, these men had attained to everlasting salvation. It is certain, however, that these persons have rather betrayed their own ignorance of ancient matters, than convicted either Justin or his associates of any thing like misrepresentation. The reasoning of Justin, *according to the Platonic principles which he and other Christians of those times had been led to espouse*, was perfectly correct; nor did he, as has been insinuated, by a kind of amphibology, impose either on himself or others, but *cherished precisely the same opinions respecting an indwelling Christ, and an interior Word, as is entertained by the mystics of modern times*. According to these Christian disciples of Plato and Philo Judæus, Christ is the same in God that reason is in man*. Believing, therefore, as they did, that all minds or souls originally were *parts of*, and sprung from, the Logos, or Divine Reason—an opinion which they had derived partly from the Egyptians, and in part from Plato—it could not but follow that they should consider Christ as dwelling in the minds of all men, and as operating and acting in all who followed the dictates of right reason†.

Thus Justin Martyr, towards the close of his Second Apology, says that the doctrines of Plato are not foreign to Christianity, though not altogether similar; and conciliates his philosophic hearers by telling them, that whatever was rightly said by any, belongs to the Christians; and that each who spoke well on these subjects, saw what was suitable and becoming and fitting to the portion of Divine Reason (or of the *Logos*) in him. With his philosopher's cloak, which he retained after embracing Christianity, he seems to have kept, at least for a time, views not very consistent with the declarations of the inspired Apostle John respecting the Word, who "was in the beginning with

* W. Penn adopted this notion in the Address to Protestants: "Right reason I mean—the reason of the first nine verses of the First of John. For so Tertullian.....gives us the word Logos; and the Divine Reason is one in all; that lamp of God which lights our candle, and enlightens our darkness, and is the measure and test of our knowledge."—Is not this to deify Reason?

† Mosheim's "Commentaries," vol. ii. p. 178.

God," and "*was God* *." It is worthy of remark, that this same Father was one of the first whose writings are appealed to as inclining to the doctrine of transubstantiation; saying, that, "as Jesus Christ our Saviour was made flesh by the Word of God, and became flesh and blood for our salvation, so we have been taught that the food which has been blessed with the word of blessing from Him, and which nourishes our flesh and blood by being changed into them, is (likewise) the flesh and blood of the same incarnate Jesus."

Irenæus says: "The tempered cup and the made bread..... receive the Word of God, and become the Eucharist of the body and blood of Christ, &c.†"

Clement still further mystifies this simple rite. Indeed, Clement boasted "*that he would not hand down Christian truth pure and unmixed; but associated with, or rather veiled by and shrouded under, the precepts of philosophy* ‡." Every reader of church history is aware of the immense evil produced by professing Christians adopting the heathen rites of Greece and Rome, under new names; and these attempts to Christianize the refined Platonism of the philosophers were regarded, by the simple-hearted, unlettered Christians of those days, with a very jealous eye. "The rise of this taste for philosophical speculation, and the ascendancy which they perceived it gradually acquiring in the minds of so many of their teachers, became a source of the

* The frequent and familiar use of the term "Word," in the Eastern philosophy, in senses varying with the different systems into which this philosophy entered, would, no doubt, be found to have influenced Justin Martyr's mode of elucidating Divine Truth to philosophic readers, whom he evidently strives to conciliate by all possible means. The Valentinians, for instance, among the Gnostics, borrowing, as Tertullian says, from the Platonists, held that, after a lapse of ages, *βυθός*, *Profundity*, & *σιγή*, Silence produced the following pair

of Eons, or beings emanating from the Deity } *νοῦς*, *Mind*, and *ἀλήθεια*, *Truth*.

These again *λόγος*, *Word*, and *ζωή*, *Life*, &c. &c.

(See Cave's "Lives of the Fathers;" and Lardner's "History of Heretics," vol. iv. p. 526, &c.)

† See Osburn's "Doctrinal Errors," pp. 103 and 105; and, for an excellent elucidation of the subject, the whole chapter on the Eucharist.

‡ Mosheim's "Commentaries," vol. ii. p. 116.

most poignant regret to all such as continued steadfastly attached to that ancient and simple species of piety which had been delivered down by the Apostles and their disciples ; inasmuch as they saw reason to fear that the cause of celestial truth might be thereby materially injured (as in reality proved to be the case), and that Divine wisdom would not long retain either its proper value or dignity in the estimation of mankind. In consequence of this, the Christian church became divided into two parties, which opposed each other with the utmost warmth.....The issue of this dispute, which lasted for a considerable time, was, that victory declared itself in favour of the patrons of philosophy ; and that those teachers came to be most respected, who, in unfolding the doctrines of religion, called in the aid of philosophical principles and precepts *."

The greater part of these Platonizing Christians † wished "that the principles of Christianity should be unfolded and explained to the people at large with every possible degree of plainness and simplicity ; and that the more abstruse and philosophic interpretation of them should never reach the ear of the multitude, but be made known only to certain select persons of tried faith and a cultivated understanding ; and not even to these through the medium of writing, but only by word of mouth. Hence arose that more secret and sublime theology of the early Christians to which we have been accustomed to refer under the title of *disciplina arcani*, and which Clement of Alexandria styles *γνῶσις*, or *knowledge* ; but which differs from what is called mystical theology only in name.

"All such Christians as aspired to a degree of sanctity beyond the vulgar, were enjoined, by means of contemplation, sobriety,

* Mosheim's "Commentaries," vol. ii. p. 119.

† Clement boldly asserts that the doctrines of our Saviour were two-fold ; the one calculated for the world at large, the other only for those *whose minds were thoroughly purified by contemplation* ; and that this secret doctrine was communicated to Peter, James, and John, and derived from them to his preceptors *by tradition*. Part only of what he had thus learnt remained in his recollection, and this could only be communicated to a select few. Others founded their unscriptural notions on pretended secret writings of Noah, Seth, and the like ; others, on immediate revelations to Zoroaster.—(See Mosheim's "Commentaries," vol. ii. pp. 153, 299, &c.)

continence, mortification of the body, solitude, and the like, to separate, as far as possible, *that soul, which was the offspring of the eternal reason of the Deity*, from the sensitive soul, as well as from every sort of bodily influence; so that they might, even in this life, be united to, and enjoy the most intimate communion with, the Supreme Parent of souls; and upon the dissolution of the body, their minds, being thoroughly disencumbered of every sordid and debasing tie, might regain, without impediment, their proper station in the regions above. To this source is to be ascribed the rise of the Mystics—a denomination of men that first made their appearance amongst the philosophizing Christians of Egypt, in the course of this (the second) century, and gradually spread themselves throughout the Christian church. Hither, also, may we refer the origin of monks, hermits, and Cœnobites *.”

The degree to which mysticism flourished in a later age may be shewn from the writings of Michael de Molinos, an author whose sentiments, as far as they were embodied in a little work entitled “The Guide to true Peace,” are well known. He says :

“There are three kinds of silence—the first is of words, the second of desires, and the third of thoughts. The first is perfect, the second more perfect, the third most perfect. In the first, that is, of words, virtue is acquired; in the second, to wit, of desires, quietness is attained to; in the third, of thoughts, internal recollection is gained. By not speaking, not desiring, and not thinking, one arrives at the true and perfect mystical silence, wherein God speaks with the soul, communicates Himself to it, and, in the abyss of its own depth, teaches it the most perfect and exalted wisdom.The perfection of the soul consists not in speaking, nor in thinking much on God, but in loving him sufficiently. This love is attained by means of *perfect resignation and internal silence* †.”—“He who would attain to the mystical silence, must be denied and taken off from five things :—1st, from the creatures; 2d, from temporal things; 3d, *from the very gifts of the Holy Ghost*; 4th, *from himself*; 5th, HE MUST BE LOST IN GOD ‡.”

* Mosheim's “Commentaries,” vol. ii. p. 160.

† English Edition, 1688, p. 57.

‡ Ibid. c. xviii. p. 176.—Very similar was the doctrine preached by a female Friend at New York in America (now among the Se-

"How well was that pure act of love understood and practised by that profound and great mystic, the venerable Gregory Lopez, whose whole life was a continued prayer, and a continued act of contemplation ; and of so pure and spiritual a love of God, that it never gave way to affections and sensible sentiments. Having, for the space of three years, continued that ejaculation, 'Thy will be done in time and in eternity,' repeating it as often as he breathed, God Almighty discovered to him that infinite treasure of the pure and continued act of faith and love with silence and resignation ; so that he came to say, that during the thirty-six years he lived after, he always continued in his inward man that pure act of love, without ever uttering the least petition, ejaculation, or any thing that was sensible, or that sprang from nature. O incarnate seraphim and deified man ! how well didst thou know *how to dive into that internal and mystical silence, and to distinguish between the outward and the inward man ! **"

Whoever carefully examines some of the views adopted by Barclay in his celebrated Apology, will find so close a coincidence with the mystical writers as can scarcely be referred to accident. He speaks of a "*spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells ; a measure of which Divine and glorious life is in all men, as a seed, which of its own nature draws, inviles, and inclines to God †.*"

paratists), as related to me by a fellow-townsmen of hers of high respectability:—"Friends, I am come to call you away from all forms, from all creeds, from your Bibles, from your meeting-houses, from all ministry ; and to call you to *that something in your own hearts which is NOTHING.*"

And similar were the words uttered in "the first meeting Robert Barclay attended, and which are said to have had considerable effect on his mind : they were these :—'*In stillness there is fulness, in fulness there is nothingness, in nothingness there are ALL THINGS.*'" (Jaffray's Diary, p. 271.)

The Hindoos "consider Brahm or the universe, as divested even of all intelligence, utterly devoid of any thought, or of any attribute, resting in a quietude so deep as to be inconceivable, but which they endeavour to illustrate by comparing it to an ocean without waves, or to sleep without dreams ;" and the consummation of the desire of the Hindoo devotee is, *absorption into the Divine essence.*—(See Douglas's "Errors in Religion," pp. 129—131.)

* Guide to true Peace, c. xvii. p. 59. † Prop. v. & vi. § xiii.

"And man being thus stated, *the little seed of righteousness*, which God hath planted in his soul, and Christ hath purchased for him, even the measure of grace and life, which is burdened and crucified by man's natural thoughts and imaginations, receives a place to arise, and becometh *a holy birth* and geniture in man; and is that *Divine air* in and by which man's soul and spirit comes to be leavened*."

In Prop. xiii. § 3, he says, concerning the communion of the body and blood of Christ ... "*That light which discovers thy iniquity to thee, which shews thee thy barrenness, thy nakedness, thy emptiness, is that body which thou must partake of, and feed upon: but that till by forsaking iniquity thou turnest to it, comest unto it, receivest it, though thou mayst hunger after it, thou canst not be satisfied with it; for it hath no communion with darkness, nor canst thou drink of the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. But as thou sufferest that small seed of righteousness to arise in thee, and to be formed into a birth, that new substantial birth, which is brought forth in the soul, supernaturally feeds upon and is nourished by this spiritual body; yea, as this outward birth lives not but as it draws in breath by the outward elementary air, so this new birth lives not in the soul, but as it draws in and breathes by that spiritual air or vehicle. And as the outward birth cannot subsist without some outward body to feed upon, some outward flesh, and some outward drink, so neither can this inward birth, unless it be fed by this inward flesh and blood of Christ, which answers to it after the same manner, by way of analogy.*"

There is, however, abundant historical proof to shew whence Barclay derived this system; for, in addition to the very frequent references in his Apology to the Greek philosophers, to the Platonizing Fathers, and the commendations bestowed by him on the mystic authors, whom he styles highly-illuminated persons, we know that George Keith asserted that he was the precursor of Barclay in these views, and he openly refers to the Platonists.

We have thus seen that mysticism was the product, not of that "grace and truth" which came by Jesus Christ, but of "phi-

* Prop. xi. § x. See the Egyptian notion of "*the most refined and supreme aether.*" p. 91.

losophy and vain deceit ;" that it has prevailed widely in the East from early ages down to the present time ; that Hea-thenism, refined by mystical views, has proved a subtle foe to Christianity ; that the Essene Jews incorporated it with Judaism ; that it gradually became introduced into the Christian church through the writings of Philo Judæus, and by means of the Platonizing Christians ; that it powerfully aided the grand apostasy ; and, fostering a spirit of exclusiveness and high-church discipline, introduced the system of a twofold doctrine in the church, and also the monastic system ; that this mixture of philosophy was ineffectually resisted by the simple Christians ; that, in the subsequent dark ages, Christianized mysticism flourished among the serious part of the Romanists, who panted for a more spiritual religion than the gross idolatry around them ; and, lastly, THAT BARCLAY, IN HIS APOLOGY, FOLLOWS THE MYSTIC WRITERS IN VIEWS WHICH ARE NOT CALCULATED TO GIVE THE SERIOUS INQUIRER EITHER A CLEAR OR CORRECT ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, " WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

C.

STRICTURES ON BARCLAY.

THE following Extracts are from the 1st and 5th sections of a Work by the late John Eliot, completed by him in the year 1829, for the use of his Friends. The Work contains:—
 " § I. Preliminary Observations, stating the reasons for quoting the Writings of George Keith. § II. On the terms ' Objective and Subjective Revelation.' § III. On the term ' Immediate.' § IV. On the terms ' Formal' and ' Formally.' § V. On the ' Seed and Birth of God : ' in which a view, comprised in a small number of subdivisions or articles, is attempted to be taken of the System of George Keith on this subject ;—a system that, to a certain extent at least, appears to have been adopted by Robert Barclay—with some remarks by way of conclusion."

It is to the " Remarks by way of Conclusion," that I wish more especially to direct the attention of the reader.

“ § I. *Preliminary Observations.*

“ It will be seen that in the following sheets, especially in that part which relates to the ‘Seed and Birth of God,’ I quote more from G. Keith than from R. Barclay. For this there are two reasons: 1st, Because the works of the latter are more readily inspected: 2dly, Because I take G. Keith to be the precursor of R. Barclay in this particular view of doctrine.

“ The intimacy between these authors was great, and the latter appears, as above intimated, to have borrowed not a little from the former.

“ That he [Keith] was well read in the philosophy of the Schoolmen is evident, and he seems to have been no stranger to the Cartesian system. He appears to coincide with R. Barclay respecting the origin of our ideas—namely, that they are *implanted* in the mind, and *excited* by external or other causes; in which I apprehend they agreed with the Platonists. (Vid. Keith, *Immediate Revelat.* cont. p. 78; Barclay’s Works, pp. 900, 901; Reid’s Essays, ii. 40, 47; Harris’s Hermes, pp. 393—397, 5th edit.)

“ His style is in general perspicuous, when not obscured by scholastic terms; and his manner of treating subjects methodical. The following testimony in his favour is from R. Barclay, in a Preface written by him* to one of G. Keith’s Tracts, entitled ‘Fundamental Truths of Christianity,’ &c., with ‘A Treatise of Prayer.’

“ ‘The author,’ G. Keith, ‘of the ensuing Treatises (who is now removed out of Europe) hath been blessed with a singular faculty of expressing himself both briefly and clearly, as is well known to such as have perused his writings; which inclined me to present these to the public.’

“ § V. *On the ‘Seed and Birth of God;’ in which a view, comprised in a small number of subdivisions or articles, is attempted to be taken of the system of George Keith on this subject; a system that, to a certain extent at least, appears to have been adopted by Robert Barclay. With some remarks, by way of conclusion.*

“ *Seed.*—Synonymous expressions: Light—Grace—a measure of

* “It is signed R. B. only; but Whiting gives the name of R. Barclay.”

Light, of Grace, or of the Spirit—the Word of God—the Gospel preached in every creature—&c. (Barclay, Apol., prop. v.; vi. § 11 ¶ 2, and § 14.)—Sometimes called Christ. (Ibid. § 15, sub finem.)

‘*Semen ipsius. Sic vocatur Spiritus Sanctus ab effectu, quod ejus virtute, tanquam ex semine quodam, novi homines efficiamur.* (Beza in 1 Joann. iii. 9.)’

“*Birth.*—Synonymous expressions: The new man—the new creature—Christ formed in us—Christ within, the hope of glory. (Apol. prop. v.; vi. § 13, 14.)

“By birth seems to be meant, at least frequently, *that which is born.* The word *birth*, as well as *partus*, used by Barclay in his Latin Apology, admits of this meaning. (Vide Ainsworth and Johnson; also Rees’s Cyclop., art. *Birth.*)

“*I. Of the Nature of this Seed, and of the Divine Birth in Man.*—‘It [this seed] is not a particle or portion of the Godhead, as the outward body of flesh and blood is a particle of the great outward world; for the Godhead is not divisible nor discernible into particles, being a most simple, pure Being, void of all composition or division, containing in himself all creaturely perfections in the greatest simplicity and eminency: but it is of the heavenly, spiritual, and invisible Substance and Being—that is, the most glorious Being and Principle, in which God, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, doth dwell.’ (Keith, Imm. Rev. not ceased, p. 11. Second Edit. 1675.)

“‘By this Seed we understand a spiritual, heavenly, and invisible principle; in which God, as Father, Son, and Spirit, dwells; a measure of which Divine and glorious life is in all men as a seed.—And this [light or seed] we * call *Vehiculum Dei*’ †. (Barclay, Apol. prop. v., and vi. § 13 and § 15 ¶ 2.)

* “So in his Works; and in the original Latin Apology, *vocamus.* In modern editions, *we is altered to some.*

† “‘To think that either God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, is the light within any man, as the immediate object of their [his] knowledge, thoughts, spiritual sense, or perception, without any intermediate illumination, Divine ray, beams, or influence,—is a most absurd notion; which the author [of the Apology] thought fit to guard against (as well as I, while among them, by my calling this Divine beam, ray, or influence, some intermediate thing or being, in one of my former books) by his calling it *Vehiculum Dei*—i. e. a Vehicle of God—as the clouds are

“ ‘The body or flesh and blood of Christ, of which believers partake, is the same “heavenly Seed,” or “Vehiculum Dei.” ’ (Barclay, *Apol.*, prop. xiii. § 2.)

“Divines and others ‘only conceive regeneration to be but an accidental, though supernatural, change on the mind; and that, in its regeneration, it putteth on no substantial principle, but only some supernatural accidents; so that, according to them, the Seed and Birth of God is but an accident: but we know it to be a substance, and feel it to be so, as manifestly as we feel and know this outward birth of flesh and blood to be a substance.’ (Keith, *Imm. Rev.* not ceased, p. 10.)

“ ‘For the confirmation of the truth, that the Seed of God is a substance, and the life of holiness and grace is substantial, I shall.....produce a few plain arguments:—

“ ‘1. Even as we do infer, from the variety and nobility of the operations of the rational life and soul, that it is a substance, and no accident; so both from the great variety and also the great nobility.....of its operations, we conclude that.....the Seed of God is a substance.’

“ [This is followed by seven other arguments, which I omit transcribing, and he then proceeds thus:]

“ ‘But some may say, It would appear that we judge the Seed and Divine Birth not only a substance, but that it is a composed substance of body and spirit. To which I answer, Yea, it is so; for its body is the vehicle or vessel of its spirit, which spirit is a measure of the Spirit or Soul of Christ, the Heavenly Man.’ (Keith, *Way to the City of God*, pp. 62—65.)

“ ‘This Spirit [of which the Seed has in it a measure] is the Spirit of Christ, as he is the second Adam, or Heavenly Man.’ (Keith, *Imm. Rev.* not ceased, p. 250.)

“ ‘A measure of the same Life and Spirit of the Man Jesus, which dwelt in Him in its fulness, and had its centre in Him

called sometimes in Scripture, and the winds his chariot; and as angels are so called; for so the word vehicle signifies. And as he had the term, so he had the notion of it from me; which notion was, that this Divine influence, ray, or beam, was a substance, as the rays or beams of the sun are reputed by divers philosophers to be a substance. But whether it be a substance, as the author contends, I do not think it proper, in this place, to debate; it leading into philosophical disputes.” (Keith’s *Answer to the Apology*, p. 212.)

which then came in the flesh, is communicated unto us, and doth extend itself into our very hearts and souls.' (Ibid. pp. 243, 244.)

" 'Nor is this to make many Christs, as some foolishly and ignorantly charge us: for as the natural life of man, that hath the centre in the heart, and floweth into all the members of the body, is yet but one life or soul; even so the Life or Spirit or Soul of Christ is but one, although it flows forth into all his members, and, in some sort, *into all mankind*.' (Ibid. p. 246.)

" 'When I say, the Soul or Spirit of Christ, as Man, is extended into us *, I do not understand the *Nephesch* of his Soul, but the *Neschamah* or *Nischmah*, even that Divine Spirit of Life which God breathed into Adam. By the *Nephesch* I understand that of the Soul of Christ common to him with the souls of other men. By the *Neschamah*, or *Nischmah*, I understand that substantial dignity and excellency of the Soul of Christ that it hath in its nature...above and beyond the souls of all other men and spirits...of angels.' (Keith, *Way cast up*, &c. p. 143.)

" 'The Seed and spiritual Body of Christ, both in Him and in us, belonging to Christ as He is the second Adam, is as really and immediately united unto the Word, as His outward Body was.' (Barclay's Works, p. 628.)

" 'God...giveth it (the Seed) from Himself out of heaven, and soweth it in the heart of man, and formeth it by his own immediate arm and power, according to his infinite wisdom, and watereth it daily and hourly with influences from heaven...whereby this seed groweth up into a perfect, substantial birth of a heavenly and incorruptible nature (though, till it come to its perfect formation, it can suffer hurt, so far as to be slain, through man his joining unto the contrary Seed and Birth), which is Christ formed within †.' (Keith, *Imm. Rev.* not ceased, pp. 11, 12.)

" 'This spiritual Birth of Christ in us is not so to be understood, as if the Spirit or Life itself did then begin to be or sub-

* "This opinion is referred to by R. Barclay,—Works, p. 795.

† "Keith afterwards, in his Answer to the Apology, is for understanding the phrase of the Birth of Christ in men, or Christ formed in men, metaphorically, or by way of allegory; and ascribes the origin of the contrary opinion to Weigelius and other

ist; for the same Spirit and Life hath been from the beginning, having its subsistence in the heavenly manhood of Christ, who was from the beginning: yea, it had also its being in us, *even since we had a being*; but by reason of our sins it lay hid or wrapped up, or imprisoned in us.' (Ibid. p. 255.)

"2. *That this Divine Seed and Birth is distinct from the Soul.*— I do indeed believe...that the Birth of God in us, or the Divine Birth which the Apostle Paul calleth 'Christ formed in us' (Gal. iv. 19), is another thing than our souls, even as the soul is another thing than the body, although as the soul and the body of a living man are united together, and not divided nor separated, so the soul of him that is regenerate is united with the Divine Birth in it.....This Seed and Birth of God in us hath a sense and discerning...by itself.....It were a great mistake to affirm, either that Christ formed in us is nothing else but our own souls, or that he hath no sense or discerning by himself.' (Keith, Imm. Rev. not ceased, pp. 248, 249, 252.)

" 'As a soul within a soul.' (Id. Way to the City of God, p. 92.)

"3. *That this Divine Seed and Birth becomes the organ of Divine and supernatural sensations in the soul, a certain supreme faculty being therein existed.*— 'If they did once apprehend or conceive aright of this Birth, as a substantial principle, giving unto man as real sensations and feelings of Divine and supernatural things, as the outward substantial natural birth giveth him of outward things, or as the principle of his own natural understanding (or reason, *ibid.* pp. 7, 8) giveth him an infallible natural knowledge of things naturally intelligible, whereof there are many instances in the sciences of the Mathematics and Metaphysics so called, they could the more easily...be convinced...that such had an infallible knowledge of God, and his requirings and leadings, and

Germans, pp. 290—294. He quotes George Whitehead saying, in his Book entitled 'Judgment Fixed,' &c.: 'This Birth is not Christ Jesus, for he is that incorruptible Seed and Word of Life which begets, forms, and brings forth the soul of man into his own nature and image; and so Christ may be said to be formed in us, as in a mysterious and elegant way of speaking, the property and effect being put for the cause.' (Whitehead, 'Judgment Fixed,' &c. p. 330.) But the whole scope of the passage might be looked at.

the things of his kingdom, who have attained unto this...Birth, to see, taste, and feel Divine and supernatural objects therein.... The Divine and supernatural Birth and Principle which giveth unto man's mind, by way of organ, as of seeing, hearing, tasting, &c. the spiritual and supernatural knowledge of spiritual and supernatural objects, is no less, if not more, infallible (than either the external senses or natural reason) at least more evident in respect of its objects.' (Keith, Imm. Rev. not ceased, pp. 37, 38.)

" ' The way and manner of immediate revelation concerning God, and the things of his kingdom...which we plead for...is that alone manifestation and revelation which is discovered and given from the Lord's Spirit unto the mind of man, in the Seed and Birth of God in him, and which the mind, in that Seed and Birth alone, receiveth. This Seed and Birth of God is only that suitable and proportionate organ, instrument, or principle, in which Divine and supernatural things can be sufficiently and satisfyingly, that is to say, intuitively, known...the mind that is clothed with the Seed and Birth of God, is the spiritual man that is able to understand and discern spiritual things...This Seed and Birth of God hath only the true spiritual senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling the Word of Life *.' (Ibid. pp. 8, 9.)

" ' As our souls are partakers of this spiritual Body of Christ, and of his Life and Spirit therein and thereby, there is indeed a new faculty awakened in them, of which we had not experience before our regeneration ; in virtue of which new awakened faculty we have real spiritual sensations of God and Divine things, and this Divine faculty † of the soul itself...which hath the spiritual sensations in it, I call,—The true inward man ; which I distinguish from the natural man, I mean from the natural faculties of the soul, such as natural reason and imagination—of which true man, in the same sense, the Platonists do speak, understanding thereby the supreme or highest part and faculty of the soul,

* "To the same effect is what Barclay says in his Apology, Prop. v. and vi. §. 14 ¶ 1 sub finem.

† "Here the soul itself is made to have spiritual sensations. Elsewhere, as these extracts shew, the Divine Seed and Birth is said alone to have the true spiritual senses ; but then it is also represented as *giving unto the mind of man*, by way of organ, the knowledge of spiritual things.

otherwise called the *mind* or spirit of man, as it may be distinguished from the natural faculties of the soul.' (Ibid. p. 258.)

" 'The spiritual discerning is held forth under the names of all the five senses' (of which instances are here adduced from Scripture). 'In like manner the things of God themselves are held forth in Scripture under the names of sensible things—as Light—Oil, Wine,—Marrow and Fatness, Bread, Flesh—and many other such like names. But, says the natural man, these are only but metaphors and figures. To which I say, albeit these names be so, yet that hinders not but that the spiritual mysteries, represented under them and signified by them, are real and substantial things, as really affecting the spiritual senses of the spiritual man with joy, refreshment, and pleasure, as the outward things affect the natural or animal senses of the natural man. And indeed these outward things are but figures * of the inward and spiritual, which as far exceed and transcend them in life, glory, beauty, and excellency, as a living body doth the shadow; so that this whole visible world, with all the glory of it, is but a shadow in respect of the spiritual and inward signified thereby.' (Ibid. pp. 14—16.)

" 'Can the best orators tell a blind man what the sun is?—' 'Can they describe to him the beauty of a lily in the field?—Do not those of the meanest capacity—who have their eyes—have a better and more satisfying knowledge thereof, than the blind man though quick of understanding?—Now if the knowledge of these natural things cannot be had sufficiently by any words, how much less can these things spiritual, and God who is a Spirit, be known by words?' † (Ibid. pp. 60, 61.)

4. " *That it is by this inward Birth of Christ in the Soul, that man is justified.*—(Vid. Barclay's Apology, Prop. VII. passim.)

* "This, and *probably not a little besides*, may be referred to the Platonists. — 'The Platonists,' remarks Abp. Leighton, 'divide the world into two, the sensible and intellectual world; they imagine the one to be the type of the other, and that sensible and spiritual things are stamped as it were with the same stamp or seal.' (*Abp. Leighton's Lectures, Lect. XV.* Brucker's *Historia Critica Philosophiæ* might also be consulted.)

† " 'All good Christians, as well as the Church of England, do agree, that the inward operations, fruits, and the effects of the Spirit, can never be sufficiently known by mere words; but that it is requisite that the things themselves be inwardly felt and experienced.' (Keith's Answer to the Apology; p. 106.)"

“ Conclusion.

“ Enough may perhaps now have been brought forward to shew, that this hypothesis or system relating to the ‘ Seed and Birth of God in the Soul,’ which makes it a distinct being or substance, as the *Vehiculum Dei*, &c. was merely adopted by R. Barclay, but did not originate with him. And, it may be permitted to the most sincere believers in the reality of the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to query whether the *Apology*, excellent as it is, would not have been still more valuable, if this hypothesis had not been introduced into it.

“ An endeavour to explain, where Scripture is silent, the nature of things that are beyond the reach of human comprehension, has been, it is scarcely necessary to observe, a very frequent error, and one to which men of a vivid imagination, such as George Keith appears to have possessed, may be considered as particularly prone. It may be here added, that were an attempt made to assign the particular causes, which, in different ages, have given rise to distorted views of Christian doctrine, it would probably not be wrong to refer much to a want of properly distinguishing between literal and figurative language, and to a disposition to carry analogical reasoning beyond its just limits.

“ Although there can be no doubt that amongst those who have entertained some of the views which have been just alluded to, and especially amongst the mystics, many truly pious characters could be enumerated; yet we shall not on that ground be warranted in considering the tenets or notions themselves as being otherwise than prejudicial to the spread of genuine Christianity. Prejudicial they must be, so far as they obscure plain Scriptural truth, and lead away from an attention to it; and they must also be injurious, in that, not being founded on Holy Writ, or at least not on a correct interpretation of its contents, they will often be found in opposition to what may perhaps be called the sound philosophy of the human mind; and hence an unnecessary occasion of stumbling is laid in the way of a cordial reception of Gospel truth.”

HAI EBN YORDAN.

THE following Extract from a work entitled “ Mahometanism Unveiled,” by “ the Rev. Charles Forster, Chancellor

of Ardfurt," &c., affords a collateral testimony, from an independent witness, of the connexion between George Keith and our early Friends; and it also supplies a link in the chain which connects the mysticism of the ancient Philosophy with the origin of Barclay's doctrine of "Universal and Saving Light."

"The fortunes of Ebn Thophail's *Philosophical Romance*, 'Hai Ebn Yokdan,' may be selected as a specimen of the place occupied by Mahometanism in the history of Christian ethicks. This piece, for which the Jews always entertained the highest veneration, was translated into Hebrew by Rabbi Moses of Narbonne. The original happily escaped from the general wreck of Arabic literature which ensued on the expulsion of the Moors from Spain. A copy fell into the hands of the elder Pocock, who, equally captivated by the *moral of the fable* and by its style, assigned to his son the task of preparing and publishing it, accompanied by a Latin version....The learned *Ashwell* first gave to the world this beautiful Arabian fiction in an English dress. *Its mystical character so recommended it, in particular to the Society of Friends, that, at the desire of this community, it was translated into English a second time by* GEORGE KEITH."—(Forster's Mahom. Unv.)

D.

EXTRACTS FROM A WORK ENTITLED "ERRORS REGARDING RELIGION," BY JAMES DOUGLAS, ESQ.

Pp. 1, 2:—"In philosophy, as well as in religion, there are only a certain number of outlets by which the mind forsakes the straight way of truth. Hence the same systems are ever recurring in the most distant ages and countries. The cosmogonies of the Ionic schools of philosophy in Greece are at this day flourishing among the Chinese, and the transcendental *Pantheism of the Eclectic school* has its counterparts in the writings of the Buddhists and the Burmans; and the mind, in its narrow revo-

lution of changes, is ever presenting again the same darkened phases of error."

P. 4 : ... "Philosophy...from reducing all the portions of the world to two eternal substances, matter and mind, reduced these two into one, Mind which alone has real existence, and which becomes matter by defect merely, as it flows dark and languid around its circumference, though glowing and energetic and spiritual at its centre, or heart ; and *hence the emanative system.*"

P. 5 : "When Christianity was proclaimed, there were two ways of receiving it,—either for men to forsake their superstitions, and their systems of philosophy, falsely so called, and to receive in sincerity 'the truth as it is in Jesus ;' or to *endeavour to form an alliance between Christianity and their former opinions.* The latter attempt gave rise to the early heresies. The Jewish heresies consisted chiefly in endeavouring to preserve the authority of Moses and their ancient Law, by reducing the Messiah and the Christian revelation to the same level. The early Gentile or Gnostic heresies consisted in attempting to incorporate Christianity with that modification of the Emanative System then prevalent in the west of Asia. The Gnostic philosophy consisted in the belief of the stream of existence flowing from its Divine Fountain through a number of personifications, such as *life, light, and wisdom*, which they named *Eons* ; till it reached its dark and impure termination in becoming matter, or in beings possessed of those malignant qualities which union with matter was supposed to occasion. And the whole of their practical religion and philosophy consisted in endeavouring to escape from matter, and in purifying the heavenly spark within them, that it might return to the original Source of light."

P. 11 : "Traces of primeval revelation, and of the worship of the true God, are found dispersed in scattered fragments over the habitable earth. Even tribes so rude as to be enumerated among the instances of men who had no religion, are yet discovered, from subsequent information, to retain vestiges, however faint, of the primitive condition of man."

P. 23 : "Unfettered by the rites and fables which they were inculcating upon others, and abounding in leisure and tranquillity, the sacred caste of Egypt, Chaldea, and India, appear to have laid the first foundations of speculative philosophy."

P. 30: "The mythology of the Hindoos has been recast upon this model by the ancient Braminical priesthood, while the opposing doctrines of Boudh derive their character from Pantheism, strictly so called. These systems have re-appeared in modern times, both in the east and in the west, and have given rise to peculiar modifications in mystical devotion, which shall afterwards be noticed. It is thus that opinions descend lower and lower in the scale of mind, and that the errors of ancient genius become the heresies of modern sectarians."

P. 33: "Even those who receive revelation, but who presume to be wise above what is written, the moment they leave the Inspired Record, and speculate upon things which are not revealed, share also in the common lot, and amply prove, by their weakness and their errors, that it is the Bible, and the Bible alone, where we are to find all our information respecting our Author and our end—respecting the character of God as our Judge and our Saviour—respecting that heavenly inheritance which is awaiting every believer in the Lord Jesus, after death has removed him from this transitory state."

P. 45: "These miserable dreamers, the Gnostics, divided Christ and Jesus into two distinct persons: Christ they considered as one of the higher Eons, Jesus as a lower Eon, and sometimes merely as a man. Christ they represented.....by an apparent, though not a real, union with a body, and also by uniting himself to Jesus, as having found a way of deliverance *for all those souls who should obey his precepts, and extricate themselves from the influence of matter.*"

P. 59: "Several heresies arose from the notion that Christianity admitted of amendments and additions. The Gnostics thought to improve it by the help of their philosophy; and Montanus, by giving it a severer cast of morals; Manes, by explaining the origin of evil upon the system of Zoroaster; and Mahomet, by reducing revelation, as he conceived, to its original purity and simplicity."

Pp. 142—146: "The third and lowest species of mysticism may be termed the devotional; which, neglecting to explain the theory of the universe, follows that only which is practical in mysticism, and is wholly intent upon re-uniting the soul to God by quietism and devout contemplation. Most of those who are

mystics of this class deny that they have any connexion with the theories of the ancient philosophers ; still they may be traced in a direct line to the pantheistic sages of Greece, and of the East. At times, even in those writings which have least pretensions to theory, the emanative system, with all its consequences, clearly breaks forth. 'Il est aisé,' says Madame Guion, 'de comprendre que tous les esprits, étant émanés de Dieu, auroient un égal instinct de réunion à leur principe, s'ils étoient entièrement dégagés des obstacles qui empêchent cet union.'—'Lorsqu'ils sont dégagés selon leur degré, ils tendent ensemble selon le même degré à leur réunion : mais lorsqu'ils sont parfaitement purifiés, ils se perdent dans l'Unité, et deviennent *un* dans cette perte, avec un rapport et une unité qu'on auroit peine à comprendre.' Another mystic writer, 'le divin Jean de la Croix,' has asserted, in the most explicit terms, the deification of human souls by their union with the Divine Being. 'Ce sont des grâces par lesquelles les ames qui les possèdent *deviennent véritablement des Dieux* par la participation qui leur a été faite de la nature Divine.'

"The great aim of devotional mysticism is self-annihilation. 'O gloire de mon Dieu!' exclaims Madame Guion ; 'je ne désire que vous, mais pour lui-seul ! O Néant, que tu es heureux, et infiniment heureux ! tu ne lui dérobes point cette gloire. Tous les hommes qui tâchent d'en usurper quelque chose, sont des voleurs. Il n'y a que le néant qui ne dérobe et n'usurpe rien.'

"It is thus they strive to honour the Creator by endeavouring to uncreate themselves. As the Hindoo sages ascribe all misery and deception to the notion of self, so the Christian mystics make all perfection consist in the loss of individuality. 'Ce moi est haïssable.'

"The new life, or regeneration, consists, according to the mystics, in self-annihilation. The work of the Holy Spirit consists in absorbing the finite soul into his own essence. 'Le Saint Esprit sépare notre esprit du grossier de ce que nous avons de propre...il l'attire le perd et le mélange avec son Tout.' The loss of personality is the only way to die to the flesh and to the world. 'Nous sortons de la circonference de la chair et du monde par la désappropriation.'

"Thus, what the mystics speak or think is no longer their own thought or expression, *but a true inspiration from on high*. 'On ne peut rien faire par soi-même ; mais un autre Esprit se sert de la plume et de la langue de ces personnes ; et si cet Esprit ne les anime pas, ils restent dans une pure ignorance ; et lorsqu'on leur parle de ce qu'ils ont écrit, et qu'on veut leur en faire rendre raison, ils sont souvent étonnés qu'ils n'y entendent rien, à moins que cet Esprit directeur ne le leur remette dans l'esprit.'

"Madame Guion adds, 'J'ai tant écrit sur tout cela, que ceci suffit ;' and most readers will, probably, be of the same opinion in this case.

"In the writings ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, several of the peculiarities of mysticism disappear. The writer professedly avoids all theory, and wishes merely to preserve a lowly and devotional frame of mind. But when the Romanists left the absurd ceremonies of their church in search of some better way of serving God than with these solemn mummeries, nothing better presented itself to them than the devotion of the mystics. The Scriptures were either a sealed book to them, or, when studied at all, were looked at through a discoloured medium. Hence, without the writer being conscious of it, the piety of à Kempis has fully as much relation to the *system of Pantheism* as to the truths of the Bible. As all religion, according to Pantheism, is founded upon union with the Deity ; and as that union is only prevented by our individuality or selfishness, which willingly, and acting from itself and for itself, separates it from the universal ocean of Being into which it would otherwise be absorbed ; *so the first step of piety consists in quietism, or the ceasing to act or to will ; and into the void thus formed by the destruction of the selfish principle, the Divine Spirit as necessarily flows as air into a vacuum. Thus the mystic is exhorted, if he wishes for religious knowledge, not to direct his attention to the truths of the Scriptures, but to pore upon the vacancy of his quiescent mind.*

"'If thou withdrawest thy attention,' says à Kempis, 'from outward things, and keepest it fixed upon what passes within thee, thou wilt soon perceive the coming of the kingdom of God.'"

P. 148 : "But however erroneous à Kempis, and many others of the mystics, may be ; and however calculated they are to mislead

the serious inquirer after truth, into visionary and dangerous opinions; yet the reader cannot doubt that they were men of genuine piety themselves, that what is excellent in them is to be ascribed to the Divine teaching; and that their errors are to be attributed in no small degree to the corrupt Church of Rome, which left no other way open to them, but that of mystical devotion."

P. 157: "In Christianity, the first step is to believe in the Saviour. 'What shall I do to be saved? Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved!' *The believer is first justified, and then purified, or sanctified, by faith. But, according to the mystical system, the disciple must be purified before he can believe—he must get rid of self first, for till then his belief would be only a selfish belief.*"

Pp. 159, 160: "Those Pantheist writers who consider Christ as our atonement, merely believe Him to be the medium, or channel, by which we flow back into the Divine Being.

"It may be asked, how the mystics, who profess Christianity, reconcile these notions to Divine Revelation? It is by a method which has been practised in all ages, by which one set of opinions may easily and successfully be engrafted upon any other system of opinions, however diametrically opposite they may be. This method is generally called *spiritualizing*. It was first practised by the *philosophers of antiquity*, upon their own mythology, and upon their ancient poets.

"Homer, from having called the Ocean the father of gods and men, was pressed into the service of his theory by Thales, who makes him assert the origin of all things from water. The Stoics were so expert in this sort of spiritualizing and allegorizing, that they made the whole of the ancient literature of Greece wear the hue of their peculiar opinions; as Cicero observes, 'Ut etiam veterimi poetæ, qui hæc ne suspicati quidem sint, Stoici fuisse videantur.' The Alexandrian school were still more eminent spiritualizers than the Stoics; and Origen, their well-instructed disciple, made the outward sense of Scripture give place to the higher and more spiritual meaning which he conceived to lurk under it. By lineal descent his method has been inherited by the mystics; and while the obvious sense of the Bible is left to the uninitiated, the enlightened few enjoy an inner revelation

appropriated to themselves, and conformable to the doctrines of Pantheism. Not that they are strictly tied down to this inner sense of the Scriptures; *they claim to have more immediate and individual communications addressed to their inward man*; discoveries of the inmost nature of things, and perceptions of the Divine existence (as some inform us, who make a vehement profession of Christianity by law established), more magnificent than were vouchsafed to the Hebrew prophets of old."

P. 161: "*Plain Scriptural statements of truth were as adverse to mysticism as to Popery*: there was nothing of that dreamy quietism about the heralds of the Reformation, which would have marked them out as the true sons of illumination in the eyes of the mystics; no still whispers from the inner shrine of Pantheism; nothing but forcible appeals to the obvious sense of Scripture, fervid eloquence, and vehement action. The truth of the Bible was strongly enforced, and strongly defined, chasing away before it the errors alike of the Polytheist and the Pantheist; and the One true God, and the One Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus, was preached, and held forth to all men in the infinity of his love, but also with the severity of his justice, and the purity of his holiness."

E.

EXTRACTS FROM OSBURN'S "DOCTRINAL ERRORS."

Pp. 14—16: "...It has been a prevalent opinion with the Christian church, that there are writings, by eminent men in religion, which, though not inspired to the same degree as the canonical books, were nevertheless indited under such a measure of the direction of the Holy Spirit as to be of high authority. Let us endeavour to analyze this notion.—There are certain books which the Spirit dictated in part, but not altogether. But can the portions so dictated be pointed out?—If they can, to what are we indebted for the remaining portions? if to the writer

alone, a fallible and erring man, what assurance have we that he may not be misleading us?—If the inspired portions cannot be pointed out, how can we safely assent to the authority of that of which we know not the origin; or believe in doctrines, concerning which we are ignorant whether they are propounded to us by the Spirit of God or by the fancy of the author in whose writings they occur? It is needless to proceed with the argument.—The notion of semi-inspiration involves a manifest absurdity: it supposes that the inspiring Spirit sanctions the introduction into the Sacred Text of that which of all things will most effectually defeat the object of the revelation; for the gift of inspiration was granted in order that its receiver might be constituted thereby the recorder of absolute, unmingled truth, and that his writings might claim the unhesitating belief of mankind, through all succeeding generations, on this ground alone: and how could this object be more entirely frustrated, than by allowing the inspired truths to be intermixed with the unassisted reasoning or imaginations of him to whom they were revealed? It would be idle to object here, that the writer might be kept from error by the Spirit, in these his mental efforts; because that is itself inspiration, and all that is meant by it in one of the ordinary acceptations of the word. Assuredly, therefore, there is no such thing as semi-inspiration: that unspeakable grace was either imparted wholly, or it was altogether withholden. And in every written production, wherein the intellectual faculties of the writer have not been entirely under the dictation and guidance of the Spirit, in the nature of things it is impossible that He can have interfered supernaturally at all. For these reasons we unhesitatingly deny that the apostolical men could have received any assistance from the Holy Spirit, in inditing their epistles, short of plenary inspiration."

Pp. 33—35: "Justin Martyr", and his pupil Athenagoras †, both believed that the Greek philosophers had a certain measure of inspiration, whereby they were enabled to arrive at those parts of their systems which are in accordance with the Scriptures.

"Clement of Alexandria enlarges and improves upon this

" * Apologia i. p. 83, D."

" † Legatio, 7 D."

notion. He declares the Divine origin of the Eclectic Philosophy—'a system composed of all that is well said, and according to righteousness, by all the Greek philosophers.' 'This,' he says, 'they received from the fertilizing influences of the Logos, or Divine Wisdom, which descended at the same time upon the Jews, giving them the Law and the Prophets—and upon the Gentiles, giving them philosophy; like the rain, which falls on the house-tops as well as on the fields*.' In another part of his work he argues thus: 'All virtuous thoughts are imparted by Divine inspiration; and that cannot be evil, or of evil origin, which tends to produce good. The Greek philosophy has this virtuous tendency: therefore the Greek philosophy is good. Now, God is the Author of all good; but the Greek philosophy is good: therefore the Greek philosophy is from God. It follows, that the Law was given to the Jews, and Philosophy to the Greeks, until the advent of our Lord †.' Elsewhere he terms philosophy 'a peculiar testament, *δικαίαν διὰ θεοῦ*, imparted to the Greeks, which served them as a stepping-stone to Christianity ‡;' he also ascribes to it the power of 'purifying and preparing the soul for the reception of the Christian faith §.'

"The notions regarding inspiration entertained by the early church being now before us, we are not at all surprised to find that the Apostolical Fathers are frequently quoted as scriptural authorities by those of the succeeding century; since, in doing so, they only assign to them a station to which they had already assigned a mere version of the Old Testament, the most palpable forgeries, and even the writings of professed idolaters! We triumphantly conclude, that, however eminent the Fathers of this epoch may have been for piety and learning, their opinions upon a point whereon they so grievously err, are, as an independent testimony, utterly valueless, and by no means to be regarded, except when supported by that irresistible weight of collateral evidence which establishes the authenticity of the Canonical Books.

* 1 Strom. § 7. So in another place: *ἡ φιλοσοφία διὰ θεοῦ ἀλλήλων διδομένη*. (Id. § 2.)

† 6 Strom. § 17; where see more to the same purpose."

‡ 6 Strom. § 8."

" § 7 Strom. § 4."

"It remains that we endeavour to account for these strange hallucinations of the early Christians.

"Inspiration, like the other miraculous gifts of the Spirit, was gradually and imperceptibly, though rapidly, withdrawn from the Church; and, as might have been anticipated, she continued to covet earnestly this best gift long after the period of its final departure. The writings we are considering abound with unequivocal proofs of the prevalence of this desire with their authors; and it is needless to remark, that in no conceivable state of mind would they be so liable to the delusions and mistakes into which they were betrayed upon this subject.

"Nor have we, as yet, seen the extent of the mischief. According to tradition, St. Hermas was a Christian minister, whose holy and useful life highly adorned the religion he professed. Nevertheless, his entire work, 'The Shepherd,' is written under this delusion; and is, moreover, the silliest book that ever exercised an influence over the human understanding.

"I think it possible that some of the apocryphal writers may have been deceived in the same manner. Like Hermas, they were agape for inspiration, and therefore easily imposed upon themselves.

"The same passion also originated the desire to be *wise above what is written*, which characterizes the writings of this period. It was under the influence of this longing after further revelation, that Tertullian supported the pretensions of Montanus to be the *Paraclete* promised by our Saviour; declared that the preceptive part of the Gospel was imperfect, and required alteration, correction, and addition*; and countenanced, like his contemporary, Clement of Alexandria, the fanciful notion of two doctrines in Christianity: the one obvious, and deducible from the simple meaning of the inspired text; the other occult, and only to be acquired by the initiated†. The same unhallowed and inordinate desire betrayed Clement also into the aberrations we have already noticed."

Pp. 255, 256: "They held the Bible to be an *occulta-*

* "Cetera disciplinæ et conversationis admittunt novitatem correctionis; operante scilicet et proficiente Gratiâ Dei.—(De Virg. Vel. c. 1')."

† De Padio, c. 3 de Idol. c. 5.

tion *, as well as a revelation. It was not given merely for the insipid purpose of teaching a few truths of easy comprehension to simple and unlearned persons; but also for one much more congenial to the pride of Philosophy. Besides these ordinary senses, the words of Holy Writ contained also the mysterious and recondite truths of a sublimer system, wrapt up in them, as in dark sayings and enigmas: and the same text of Scripture, which only confirmed the faith, assured the hope, and kindled the love of the common Christian, the professor of philosophical Christianity cast into the alembick of his philosophy, subjected to many a strange and uncouth process, resolved into its primary elements; and at length pointed out, with an air of triumph, amid the dense fumes which enveloped it, the subtle drop of Gnostical wisdom that his art had elicited, often too subtle for perceptions less practised than his own.

.....“ This system of interpreting afforded the facility, which was so eagerly taken advantage of at a very early period, of inoculating Christianity with Heathen philosophy. The philosophical inquirer had only to assign to such words as *λογος*, *ἰσχυρα*, *γενεσις*, in the Sacred Writings, the senses in which they were accepted by the sect to which he belonged, and to accommodate the context, which, in a language so copious in meanings as the Greek, was seldom attended with much difficulty; and then the Bible taught the Platonic, or Aristotelian doctrines, according to the prepossession of the commentator.”

“ * See 5 Strom. § 5.”

FINIS,

